













A HISTORY OF  
THE IRISH PARLIAMENTARY PARTY

VOLUME II.







A CONTINENTAL O'DONNELL.



*Carlos O'Donnell*  
*Duque de Tetu*  
*1883*

# A HISTORY OF THE IRISH PARLIAMENTARY PARTY

VOLUME II.

PARNELL AND THE LIEUTENANTS  
COMPLICITY AND BETRAYAL

WITH AN EPILOGUE TO THE PRESENT DAY

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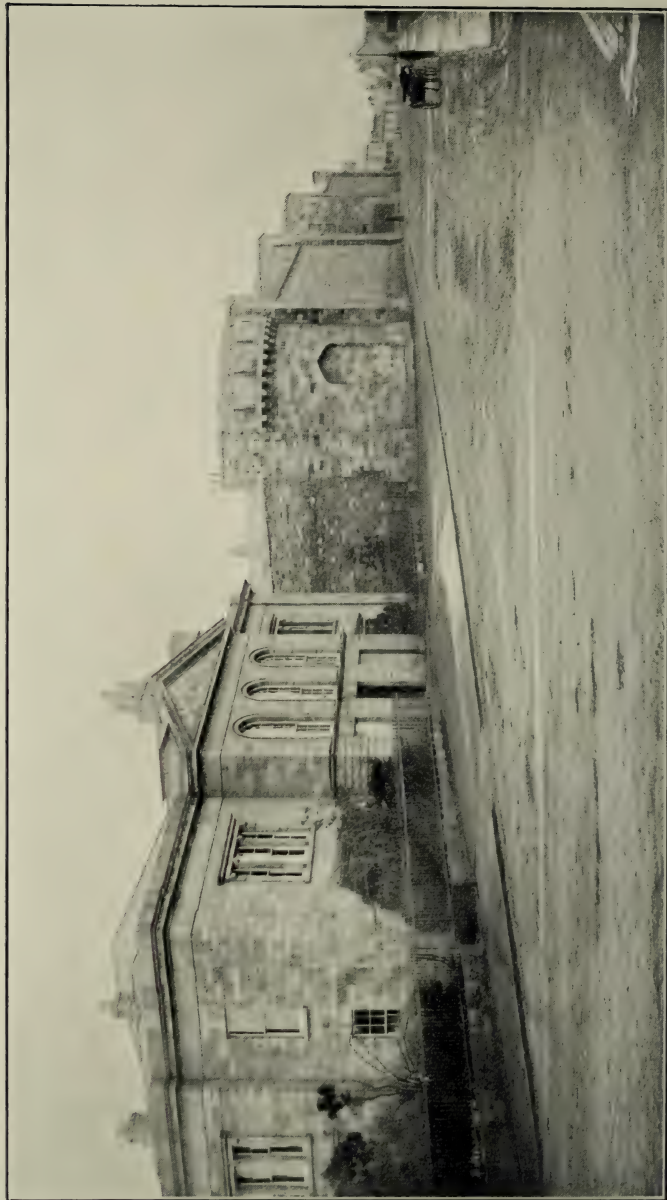


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*Photo : Wm. Lawrence]*

KILMAINHAM JAIL.



## CHAPTER XVIII

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Foreign Opinion on Irish Crisis—Ford's Cheques—National and Ribbon Fenians—Parnell and Crime—Coercion before Reform plays Parnell's game—Crude Obstruction brings the Dollars—Gladstone's unsettling Land Bill—Parnell's Provocation—'The Old Methods' to the Front—*United Ireland* founded—Safe in Kilmainham!—The Land League suppressed—Stafford Election.

As the year 1880 drew to its close, the rumours increased on all sides that the Government was contemplating a new Land Bill for Ireland in the next session of Parliament. In the Owls' Room of the *Morning Post*, sacred to the use of the leader writers, notes on the subject were compared which had been gathered from many sources of information. *The Owl* had been a famous organ of news and satire, of which Mr. Borthwick, our proprietor, had been a moving spirit; and the room where its secret contributors met was now the centre of confabulations not quite germane to the ideas of the ancient organ of society and gossip. I always wrote my articles at home, but in the Owls' Room at certain hours I was certain to meet Mr. Baker Greene and Mr. Sheridan Knowles. We had all ceased to be proud of having invented the active policy. Its popularity had been 'conveyed' for the ruin of Home Rule and the rise of the Land League. We were not quite certain of all that the Land League might be, but it was increasingly probable that it was not very nice. We had no doubt about the reality of distress in the west. We had converging information from a hundred quarters upon the influence of Parnell with the Liberals. Baker Greene was full of the conversations of judges, barristers, great diners-out, who heard what all

sides said. 'Bowen says that Gladstone is obsessed with Parnell.' 'Has Charles Russell a general retainer for the Land League?' I knew that Russell owed his seat for Dundalk to Parnell; and I had reason to believe that he was a typical Ulster Liberal full of genuine zeal for the tenantry, and knowing no good of the landlords. Sometimes we had a valuable word from Borthwick, our proprietor, who was also general editor and superintendent of everything. Kindly, keen, ambitious, independent though loyal to his party, full of an infinitude of genial scepticism born of an immense range of experiences and acquaintances, Mr. Borthwick was a fascinating and illuminating critic of men and things. 'What is the situation? The Liberals have a policy of surrender in Ireland as elsewhere. The Conservatives have no policy at all.' Mr. Borthwick, like us all, was a Fair Trader; and on the *Post* we were engaged in denouncing Unconditional Free Trade and in fighting Mr. Chamberlain. As Irishmen, the three of us hated Free Trade like poison, because it had destroyed tillage and planted sheep and oxen instead of men. But we were not allowed on the *Post* to propose either ratbane or the block for the school of foreign corn. We must be moderate in our detestation. 'The Irish land question,' said Baker Greene, 'is nine-tenths Free Trade.' That being the fact, it was sufficient reason for the British Government adopting another hypothesis.

An immense amount of foreign opinion of a highly skilled kind came to us on the subject of the contemporary condition of Ireland. Dr. Max Schlesinger, the London correspondent of the *Neue Freie Presse*, sent me a couple of German writers—one, of course, a professor—who had been sent to study the Land League for a syndicate of German and Austrian journals. Their appreciations were unhesitating.

Much misery. More ignorance. No government. No intelligible demand for reforms. The peasants headed by townspeople mostly. Good soil. Agriculture not merely bad but worthless. German *Bauern* would raise treble all crops

easily. Priests in everything. Mr. Parnell, a young man of distinction, who does not know how to manage his own estate. Vast sums coming from America with the object of political revolution more than economic reform. No visible way out.

A gentleman who wrote both for the *Época* of Madrid and the *Français* of Paris—the Duc de Broglie's organ—was introduced to me by George Elliot Ranken, editor of the *Tablet*. He was frankly amazed at the total failure of the authorities in Ireland to protect the inoffensive population. He compared the Irish Constabulary most unfavourably with the famous Guardias Civiles of Spain. 'They always arrive too late, like the Carabiniers of Offenbach.' This comparison with Offenbach's prodigious defenders of the peace has often been made in my hearing. 'Half soldiers, and not-a-jot police.' The great ultramontane organ of Paris, Veuillot's *Univers*, employed its correspondent in England. Though full of love of Catholic Ireland, 'the martyr nation,' and full of dislike of the English Protestants, he was unable to discover that the Catholic Irish, as represented by the Land League, were very different from his own anarchists and communists. One point of resemblance was the practical identity of the sort of out-of-works, ex-reporters, clerks, distillers' bagmen, trade failures of all kinds, who were the leaders of the peasantry; just like the Delecluze, Pyat, Pipe-en-bois, &c., who formed the general staff of the Paris revolutionists. Parnell suggested the frequent type of 'out-at-elbow aristocrat.' Rochefort was a marquis. Parnell suggested a 'Rochefort sans l'esprit.' The paralysis of the British Government in Ireland was the theme of common astonishment among Continental observers, from the *Journal* of Brussels to the *Perseveranza* of Milan. M. John Lemoine asked me for an explanation. 'Men got up in public and demanded the starvation of peaceable citizens! And nothing was done to these organisers of murder.' I explained that both constitutional parties in England were waiting for the votes of Mr. Parnell's party, and that a lot of murders



might be a parliamentary incident. Lemoinne was a tremendous admirer of the British Constitution, like most of the writers of the *Journal des Débats*. The Marquis de Beau-court, editor of the *Revue des Questions Historiques*, wrote expressing his regret that Irish nationality was contaminated by such excesses, and apparently regretting also that he had supported me for the vice-presidency of a great Catholic *Congrès* some years previously. I pacified him on my personal honesty, by assuring him that I was certain to be removed from Parliament at the next election, 'for never having been in jail for homicidal conspiracy.'

It was Mr. Baker Greene at this time who drew my special attention to the essential and fundamental feature of all agrarian distress in Ireland. 'Ireland is always on the verge of famine because Irish agriculturists do not know, or do not practise, agriculture.' Physician, surgeon, barrister, journalist, politician, Baker Greene was also a scientific agriculturist of no mean order. A matrimonial engagement to a Polish lady had made him contemplate for two years the necessity of being prince consort on an East Prussian domain of considerable extent. He could speak of the ways of husbandmen in Posen, Pomerania, Bohemia. When he remembered the comfort which surrounds small peasant cultivators on land far inferior to the soil of Ireland, in climate far inferior to the climate of Ireland, without a market for dairy and kitchen-garden produce to compare with the English market for Irish produce, he raised his hands in blank despair. This is a uniform feature of Irish agitations for change of agrarian laws. It is assumed on both sides, by British Government as by Irish agitator, that the produce of land depends upon something done or talked in a room at Westminster, and not upon such matters as spades, hoes, manures, seeds, early rising to work, late staying to work, the choice of suitable crops, the choice of suitable seasons, hundreds of miles from Westminster altogether. In the whole of the discussions and protests and appeals on this side and that in the case of the Land League or against the Land League, there is hardly a word to imply



that the starving Irish tenant might not only pay his £10 a year rent, but might double the produce of his farm if he simply knew how to farm or was willing to farm, supposing him to know. I do not like priests who degrade their great office by being political firebrands or commercial traffickers, but I revere the priest who preaches the moral and practical virtues to the people; and in a note<sup>1</sup> at foot of the page I quote the testimony of revered clergymen, bishops, on this very matter, namely, the failure of the Irish farmers to make their farms as profitable, or half as profitable, as the farms of Danes, Dutchmen, or Bohemians, on worse land and in worse climates. If the Land League farmer turned the earth with a spade instead of bawling himself hoarse at a meeting, there would have been very little 'land question' for Messrs. Ford and Parnell.

Meantime, there had been active realisation of the programme of operations indicated in that cynical prediction at Ennis: 'Next year's Land Act will be the measure of your activity this winter.' America was the great consideration. If America sent over enough of dollars, enough of paid agents could be found to 'visit' the recalcitrant, enough of paid lawyers could be found to defend the 'visitors,' enough of paid compensation to encourage an 'active' patriot on returning from jail, in the rare event of a jury presuming to find him guilty. It was the American money that made the mare go. It may

<sup>1</sup> After the peasant has got all the concessions demanded as pretexts of the Land League, here is still his state, especially in the west, specially pauperised by Congested Board relief.

'In no other part of the world is agriculture in such a deplorable condition as in the west of Ireland. . . . What you do cultivate gets only an apology for cultivation. . . . You make a few spasmodic efforts at spring and autumn, and you sleep the rest of the year.'—*Most Rev. Archbishop Healy of Tuam*.

'Farmers say that tillage would not pay, but that is absolutely untrue. Tillage would pay if Irish farmers worked as people did in England and Scotland.'—*Most Rev. Bishop Boylan of Kilmore*.

'Farmers pay 5d. and 6d. a stone for potatoes which they might have grown for themselves.'—*Rev. Father James Clancy, P.P.*

Of course, the farmer 'who sleeps half the year' may welcome a Land League which promises that it will make the Government give him a farm rent free; but a man can be rent free, and, if he still sleeps instead of working, he may want another Land League to get a pension from the State.

be remembered that Davitt had been sent to America in May to counteract those National Fenians who could not see that Land League methods meant either Irish independence or Irish honour. It was, accordingly, his cue to represent the whole agitation as a mere preliminary to separation. Thus, a couple of weeks after the Ennis speech on the 'winter activity' that was to produce a League Land Act at Westminster, Michael Davitt announced over again—for the special purpose of conciliating the National Fenians—in a speech at Kansas City in September: 'That in declaring this war against Irish landlordism, in not paying rent in order to bring down the garrison in Ireland, we know that we are preparing the way for that independence which you enjoy in this great American Republic.' It almost follows from Davitt's speech to the National Fenians in America that all the charges of rack-renting and tenant-driving alleged against the owners of Irish estates were made, not because they were true, not because there was any tenant-driving, but because the landlords were 'the garrison.' For my part, I have never believed in the Lancashire mill-hand's inexorable hatred of England. He was taking the oath of allegiance to the British Sovereign as a member from Ireland in the Imperial Parliament within a dozen years. That is not the spirit of a Kossuth towards Austria or a Garibaldi towards the King of the two Sicilies. Davitt was a Socialist land nationaliser above all, and his speeches to the National Fenians in America were only intended to get money for use against the individual ownership of landed estate. The distinction between Davitt and Parnell was this: that Parnell was neither a land nationaliser nor a National Fenian, but a whole-souled and thoroughgoing Parnellite all the time. He was quite prepared to take Mr. Gladstone, or any other of the Queen's Prime Ministers, as 'our great leader,' if the great leader would make him leader of an Irish sub-Parliament, and—far more interesting—leader of the Irish delegation of eighty members in the Imperial Parliament. That was

National Fenianism enough for him. Meantime, the business was to get money from America in order to produce such turmoil and misery in Ireland as would induce the British Government to bring in a League Land Bill the coming year. With the help of Mr. Patrick Ford that was done. 'Three-fourths of the enormous sum of money received by the Land League from America,' said Mr. Davitt himself, 'was subscribed through the appeals made by Patrick Ford.' It is superfluous to mention that the whole of that enormous sum of money, sent for breaking up society and breaking down property, was carefully delivered by the postal agents of the British Government, which felt that it was no part of its duty to stop the wages of terrorism, riot, and intimidation. Surely since the world was made, there never was a Government so meek and debonair, so inviting and hospitable to the revolutionist and incendiary, as the British Government in Ireland by Act of Union. What a good job for the plotters and terrorisers that the stern lords and gentlemen of the Irish Parliament had been dispersed and terminated by the genius of English statesmanship. Imagine haughty Henry Grattan or Lord Chancellor Clare carefully handing Pat Ford's cheques to Mr. Egan or Captain Moonlight !

The core and centre of the *Times's* blundering about Parnell and the Land League came from failing to perceive that the National Fenians were meant to be diddled, and were diddled, from one end of the New Departure to the other. Of course, the root and explanation of the persistent and simple blundering of the *Times* were merely that the *Times* deliberately wished not to understand the difference between a criminal and a patriot when Irish Nationalists were in question. A similar wish to dishonour Irish Nationalism had caused the stainless soldiers of the Fenian rising to be sent to penal servitude in the same jail-yard and the same chain-gang with the lowest beasts of a low bestiality. That policy was to produce the Invincibles. It was to produce, if England only knew, the



Boer War. To the philosophical observer it should seem to be inferior wisdom to add insult to wrong, and the longing for personal revenge to the questions of nation and nation. It seems very inferior wisdom to let foreign nations observe a course of outrageous insolence and provocation which had not even a pretext of justification. The chivalrous life and character of John O'Leary impressed foe and friend. If we cross the Atlantic, we may see in the chair of great Irish gatherings an Irish-American soldier and country gentleman of the best class and the most perfect distinction, United States Colonel of Cavalry Robert Emmet, a relative of the gallant enthusiast who was executed in Thomas Street, Dublin, one hundred and seven years ago. In an immense organisation like the Clann-na-Gael there must, humanly speaking, be desperadoes as well as chevaliers. The political influence of such a body must tempt unworthy as well as worthy ambitions. A secret organisation has always special defects in want of criticism and examination, want of explanation and competition, which work for the concealment of unfit members much more than for the keeping of political secrets. But, all said and resaid, there would be hardly one hundred rotten members in the hundred thousand. You may recognise National Fenians as your deadly enemies so long as you do Ireland wrong, but what is the use of smuggling up a Pharisee face and averring that these be criminous classes? The non-Irish Americans, who count among their best and best-known friends tall Irishmen by the thousand who would ride through London streets to-morrow with Sarsfield or with Sheridan; well, these non-Irish Americans only say some Englishmen lack the chivalrous temper.

On September 19, 1880, Mr. Parnell, speaking in the County Clare, had urged his followers to treat every opponent of the Land League 'like the leper of old,' meaning infinitely worse than leper or pariah, 'even in the house of worship.' Did he forget that a population taught to outrage the commonest principles of human society, to violate the foundations of Christian intercourse, would not



always hesitate to add murder to inhumanity? Within a week from that Ennis speech, on September 25, in the adjoining county of Galway, Lord Mountmorres was murdered by a rifle volley, his remains were refused even a cart to convey the body to the widow's home, and his murderers were never revealed. On October 10 following, the Catholic Archbishop McCabe of Dublin, who had already declared that the Land League schemes were 'of such an order that no Government laying claim to statesmanship can possibly entertain them,' now issued a pastoral, read in all the Catholic churches of Ireland, denouncing not only the commission of agrarian murders, but also 'those who failed to express abhorrence at them.' Lord Spencer, even after the adhesion of Mr. Parnell to the policy of Mr. Gladstone, was only able to say: 'I think Parnell disliked crime, but he never publicly condemned it.' There is at least one point on which Daniel O'Connell towers by an immeasurable altitude above Parnell. O'Connell proclaimed on every occasion that 'he who commits a crime gives strength to the enemy.' What avails to enumerate the horrors which passed between the speech at Ennis and the opening of the new session at Westminster? Murder followed murder. Outrage and intimidation dogged the steps of the Land League. If I were to interpret the attitude of Parnell in presence of the criminality of the Land League, I should be obliged, by ordinary reasoning on human action, to conclude that he desired to utilise the crime while ignoring and, if advisable, shielding the criminal. It was expedient for his purposes that certain persons or classes of persons, without distinction of age or sex, should be terrorised into doing, or not doing, certain acts in connexion with his plan for dominating Ireland. Let us even assume that he believed in the moral goodness of his plan, though it may be more probable that this consideration did not even occur to him. The great thing was that his plan required certain classes of persons to be terrorised to the point of obedience, or? He drew up an elaborate code of instruction for the infliction of all but

death by something more than pin-pricks. In a number of cases the executioners substituted a bullet or volley of bullets for the suggested torments. It was too much impatience, or too much zeal. Parnell did not even lament the excessive proceeding. He was always prepared to pay for the defence of the accused criminals. After all, the crime, though somewhat out of proportion, served the general strategy of terror very well. It was as if, on some mud flat of the Congo or the Niger, a band of fetishmen, entrusted with the task of attaching a victim to be eaten alive on an ant-hill, simply knocked out the brains of the intended martyr. Probably the great Ju Ju would not inquire too closely into the substitution of penalty. The only possible argument which can influence me against the adoption of this explanation is, that the highest, most cultured, and most responsible statesmen of England, in possession of all the resources of official and unofficial information, entered into the most flattering consultations, and concluded the most important alliances, with Mr. Parnell.

On January 7, 1881, the session of Parliament was opened, momentous in the English history of Ireland because called to produce a Land Act, which met none of the most pressing requirements of the situation; and a Coercion Act, which delivered Parnell from the opposition within the Land League at a time when it was becoming most dangerous to his supremacy, centred in his personal control the direction of the land agitation, and removed all fear of serious chastisement from the agents of intimidation and persecution. The Land Act of 1881 was a monument of the noble intentions of the greatest of British parliamentarians. The Coercion Act revealed in every line the righteous, as well as the self-righteous, impulses of Mr. Forster. Together they formed almost as calamitous a combination as could be devised for inciting discontent to a condition not short of desperate, for making disorder incurable, and for confounding confusion beyond the possibility of extrication. In admirable conformity with British usage towards

Ireland, it was the new coercion which preceded the new reform. For the most of three weary months a proposal, to allow the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland to imprison until the end of September 1882 everybody whom he 'reasonably suspected' of treasonable or agrarian offences, occupied the House; and only on April 7 did Mr. Gladstone state the outline of his Land Bill and propose its second reading. Even from the point of view of coercion, there was absolutely no valid excuse for this delay. A simple suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act could have followed the Ennis speech and the Mountmorres murder. An indemnity could have been forced, when necessary, through the Houses with no more violation of parliamentary liberties than was achieved by Mr. Speaker Brand in the course of the new coercion debates. If the Government had considered that there was nothing in the Ennis speech and the Mountmorres murder, together with the hundreds of monthly outrages and menaces, to require new coercion during the winter months which had passed, they could afford to have waited a fortnight or a week at the end of January, while bringing forward the remedial legislation which all classes in the country united in demanding without waste of time. Instead of remedies the Irish were forced, during three months, to debate a measure of repression, which was only a very thin disguise of the suspension of Habeas Corpus after all. It would have been easy to introduce a land reform, a Conservative reform, which would have finally removed the Irish dread of arbitrary eviction; and very probably, almost certainly, all that was really formidable in the existing excitement would have disappeared. Instead of this sensible course, there was the new coercion, while the Irish party and, what was more important, the Irish tenants had no clue to a knowledge of what remedy might be contemplated beyond the vague verbiage of a paragraph in the Queen's Speech which contained this drivel of a promise:

I recommend you to undertake the further development of the principles of the Irish Land Act of 1870 in a manner conformable to the special wants of Ireland, both as regards the



relations of landlord and tenant, and with a view to effective efforts for giving to a larger portion of the people by purchase a permanent proprietary interest in the soil.

Further developments in a manner conformable! Effective efforts by purchase! What was the meaning of this abracadabra? As far back as a twelvemonth before, in the closing days of the last ministry, Mr. Shaw had urged the necessity of Irish land reform. As far back as last May, on the entry of the new ministry, Mr. O'Connor Power had urged the pressing necessity of an amendment of the Land Act of 1870. On that occasion Mr. Gladstone himself had replied that the subject deserved and would receive his 'serious attention,' but 'it was unreasonable to expect the Government when it had been only ten days in existence as an administration to have sufficiently acquainted themselves with the details of so difficult a subject.' The plea for delay even in May was the utter condemnation and bankruptcy of the Act of Union. Though the distress had existed all through the year 1879, though the Irish party, myself personally among others, had moved the Beaconsfield Cabinet to take some adequate notice of it during the session of 1879, here was the head of the British Government, nearly a year afterwards, pleading that 'in ten days' he could not study the Irish land question! It was nothing to us whether the British Government was 'ten days' old or ten years old. The Government of the day, whatever it was, should be able to deal with a matter of national starvation on the instant, or the Union was somewhat of a myth as well as a usurpation. Now we were in another year, and still there was nothing but the vague verbiage I have quoted; and not till April were we to have the first reading of a Land Bill, which has never stopped the emigration of a family or promoted the cultivation of an acre. The question is not the generous heart and noble mind of Mr. Gladstone. The question is that generous hearts and noble minds can make absolutely no good whatever of the Act of Union.

The absence of remedial legislation made the coercionist



legislation a thousandfold more odious. Practically, it was suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act for everybody alleged, in some secret chamber or closet, to be connected with agrarianism or treason. 'The police,' said Mr. Forster, 'knew all the dangerous characters. All that was wanted was power to arrest them for a time.' In the first place, we all knew that, as police, the Irish police are a very incompetent body, though well enough as fine, big, half-drilled half-soldiers. Secondly, when men found themselves imprisoned for many months without accusation or evidence, they longed for revenge, and their counsels and example made ten converts to violence in place of the one in prison. Thirdly, every prison full of Land Leaguers became the Land League headquarters for a county or province. The absence of reform and the introduction of this coercion, which put everybody at the mercy of 'unseen accusers in the dark,' exactly played the game of the Land League, especially in America. The speeches of the many Englishmen—Cowen, Labouchere, Bradlaugh—who spoke, and spoke most ably, against coercion, deepened the American feeling that Ireland was being foully used. Mr. Charles Russell, whose high position at the English bar caused him to be counted twice, as Englishman and as Irishman, delivered a great address against the measure. The Irishmen of all shades—Mr. Shaw, Mr. Dillon, Mr. Parnell, Mr. T. P. O'Connor—spoke with passion and power. The newcomers of last session had found their feet beyond all doubt, and were proving themselves swordsmen of debate equal to the best upon this ground of combat. In fact, there was no patriot of us all whom the coercion debate did not suit as nothing else could. Everybody knew the subject. The defence of the constitutional liberties of an ancient and oppressed nation was a theme which found supporters in the press of every country in the world. Parnell became really eloquent in his speeches, and it is, besides, a gross error which represents him as deficient in speaking power. He made a clear statement clearly. He left no doubt about the contempt and defiance which he opposed to British

tyranny. Occasionally he was violent ; and his violence was admirably chosen and timed. ' This will rouse all Irishmen from America to Australia,' I said to him one day. ' It has done so. Forster does not suspect the good he has done us,' replied Parnell. It was an unexampled and unsurpassable opportunity for self-advertisement in the noblest sense which Mr. Forster had thrust upon Parnell. Every word, every gesture seemed henceforth to be directed at the attention of Irish-American lookers-on. No suspicion of the mistake which he had made seemed to steal over Mr. Forster before he had gone so far that escape was impossible. In a few months he was also to confer on Mr. Parnell the crowning good fortune of that gentleman's life by suppressing the Land League just when it was becoming Parnell's most dangerous enemy. Even before that most desirable consummation Mr. Patrick Ford's ally was absolutely radiant at the stroke of luck which her Majesty's Government had presented to him. A Coercion Bill without a Land Bill ! The debates on that Coercion Bill would form such a preparation for the future Land Bill, whatever it might be, that it would be impossible for the Government ever to obtain for it the reception which might have attended it if coercion had not come first. It was natural in such favourable circumstances, with such ravishing prospects, that Parnell should pour the joyous news into the bosom of the *Irish World*. We learn that in the midst of the opening engagements with the awkward enemy, Parnell sent this triumphant telegram to Mr. Patrick Ford :

The fight the Irish members are making for the liberties of the people is inspiring and strengthening every Irishman. We are now in the thick of the conflict. The present struggle against coercion will, please God, be such as has never been seen within the walls of Parliament.

The reverent invocation of the Deity was especially appropriate in a message to Patrick Ford, whose tender piety was to announce in the blasphemous rhapsodies of his style : ' The Creator called nothing into existence in

vain. Dynamite is a blessed agent, and should be availed of by the Irish people in their holy war.' More than a million of dollars were to come from Patrick Ford to the sustainment of Parnell during the two years of spacious life which were now guaranteed by Mr. Forster. There was far more of the gentle humorist, savouring his interior glee, in Charles Stewart Parnell than was ever surmised by the British politicians and American enthusiasts who always insisted upon taking him at the serious maximum. He was perfectly aware that he would never expire from hæmorrhage through dying on the floor of the House. He felt that he was too picturesque a portion of the British Constitution ever to be allowed to suffer overmuch discomfort from being semi-secluded in an official suite of apartments. Though not exactly born to treasure, he was now aware that Mr. Forster and Mr. Gladstone had put the silver spoon in his mouth; and he was amiably bent on enjoying its advantages. When the Chief Secretary had guaranteed that the suspects to-be-arrested would be boarded and lodged on the gentlemanly footing of unconvicted prisoners of state, he saw that there was absolutely nothing to frighten his merry men to the value of a cowtail. But how the great heart of Irish America would thrill at the horrors of the British bastilles described, catalogued, and illustrated in the lurid dispatches of the Irish News Agency! Of course, there was bitter insult and humiliation to the Irish Nationalist in the least portion of the legislation or non-legislation which was being forced—by sheer compulsion—upon Ireland by ludicrously incompetent foreigners. Parnell, who was also a patriot to a considerable extent, was honestly angry as well as delightfully amused and profitably interested.

The preparations were at once made in all haste for the grandest display of mortality on the floor of the House which had ever been dreamed by Dublin students of the 'Ballads of the Nation' or the 'Fenian Sixty-Ninth,' New York Militia, parading down the Bowery. Mr. John Devoy was to be the fascinated contemporary of a scene



which made life worth living . . . only to read about it ! From the termination of Mr. Forster's speech introducing the new coercion, there was one watchword for the members from Ireland. 'Obstruct. Obstruct in the crudest way and by the simplest methods. Let everybody see that you are obstructing.' There might be a little risk in this proceeding anywhere else in Europe, except perhaps the Austrian Reichsrath, when Czechs and Pan-Germans are slinging ink-bottles at one another. There was not, indeed, even the danger of a slung ink-bottle at Westminster. You merely danced on the traditions of Parliament. The Irish News Agency, which was understood to be the product of the descriptive force of Mr. T. P. O'Connor and Mr. T. M. Healy, and the *Irish World* of Mr. Patrick Ford, did the rest. They communicated to the payers of dollars the necessary amount of information about the heroic deeds and dangers of the payees of dollars in order to confortificate, corroborate, and confirm the resolution of the payers to continue the stream of cheques and greenbacks into the war-chest of the payees. The utmost that was to be apprehended in this campaign was that the indignant and exasperated Briton might in crowning moments of exasperation tear sundry pieces out of—you ?—no, only out of his own parliamentary traditions and constitution. As a net result of this sort of unequal warfare, after a couple of years of the struggle, there was almost as little left of the parliamentary liberties of England as if the whole thing had always been a tape-tied Continental Diet ; while half a million of pounds sterling had reached the Land League and Co., and a special consolation of some £40,000 had found its way to Mr. Parnell's previously-attenuated bank account.

After one of the obstructive debates had continued night and day for forty-one hours, Mr. Speaker Brand arose, in the morning of February 2, 1881, and undertook—not to bring our conduct before the House—merely to break the constitution of the House and to stop debate by his own decision. The liberty of every constituency



and every member of Parliament in the kingdom was destroyed by that intervention. It was only the Parnellites and the Land League who made a few million dollars out of such transactions. Personally I regarded the whole thing with contempt. I knew Home Rule was killed by Land Leaguism. I knew that minorities were more interested than majorities in preserving the liberties of Parliament. When I had the control of the Irish opposition on the South Africa Bill in 1877, I had absolutely declined to push opposition to the point when the House must interfere. In all these proceedings I did a man's part fairly and squarely against coercion, whether gross or merely silly. But I hated and despised the mere obstruction of ignorance and unadaptability. I knew that there might be a hundred occasions when the liberties of the House of Commons might have been again invaluable for the defence of human rights. Now this unspeakably silly Coercion Bill was to destroy parliamentary liberties and endow Land League Parliamentarians! It was too absurd. On nothing but a Coercion Bill would it have *paid* to go all lengths in obstruction. It was because the Irish were defending Irish liberty that the American Irish sent the money. If only there had been a good and wise Land Bill, there could have been no talk of obstruction, and coercion might never have followed. Plentiful un wisdom is the dower of Downing Street. In Mr. Barry O'Brien's 'Life of Parnell' (i. 285), there is a pleasing story how I got involved in one of the most sensational suspensions of Irish members. It was on the occasion of the arrest of Michael Davitt for having broken the good behaviour required by his conditional liberation, through his connexion with an association avowedly proposing to expel the British Crown from Ireland by means of a revolution against landed property. I do not see how the conditions of a ticket-of-leave could be more flagrantly violated. However, we were bound to oppose it, but I had got no inkling of what the opposition would be. The Land Leaguers, liking not my popularity, wished to exclude me from anything they thought would

be popular. In the same way, the Irish News Agency regularly boycotted me in its communication to the Irish newspapers abroad and at home. Here is the narrative: 'I was sitting quietly in my rooms in Craven Street,' says Mr. F. Hugh O'Donnell, 'when suddenly Biggar rushed in and said, "*We have been all suspended. You must get suspended too. Go down to the House at once.*"' As I took my seat, Mr. Gladstone was speaking. I moved at once that he be no longer heard, and got suspended on the spot.' My faithful old comrade, Mr. Biggar, always the soul of loyalty to cause and friend, had perceived the joy of the newcomers at my absence from a historic list of martyrs for Ireland, and had hurried to insist on my spoiling the game. So there was my name assured of patriotic immortality among the heroes of the League! Mr. Gladstone had moved that I be no longer heard on the Challengel-Lacour incident some time before. Mr. Speaker Brand had accepted the motion. Here was I making *the same motion against the original mover* of it. Mr. Speaker Brand had me suspended on the spot! I had the delicious sensation both of foiling the Land League and exposing a certain kind of official fair play. So my old comrade had helped me most agreeably.

Almost everybody was in a thoroughly bad temper when at long length Mr. Gladstone introduced his new Land Bill on April 7, 1881. It was a very able, very intricate, very elaborate work of great intelligence. Report said that it was a vastly more comprehensive measure than the original sketch outlined in the Speech from the Throne three months before. But the Coercion Act was law. Men were being hustled into prison all over Ireland without trial or known accusation, and very often without reason. Three months of violent agitation had intervened. The relations of landlords and tenants had grown worse and worse. At last came this Land Bill, which appeared to be drawn up for some country which certainly was not Ireland. 'It is the apotheosis of *Non Sequiturs*,' said my acute friend, Mr. Baker Greene. It was probably as

marvellous an intellectual accomplishment, even making allowance for the official and unofficial assistance which Mr. Gladstone received, as ever marked the efforts of a statesman belonging to one country to legislate for the most intimate and peculiar customs and wants of another country which he only knew from books. To take the leading features and self-contradictions or other glaring anomalies of the Bill :—

1. Mr. Gladstone declared that only a small proportion of the Irish landlords had misused their position, and, therefore? he proposed that the whole of the Irish landlords should be equally liable to the interventions of the Bill.
2. Mr. Gladstone declared that all Irish tenants had a right to have fair rents fixed, and, therefore? required them to go singly before the Land Courts in order to get the fair rent fixed in every single case after trial and evidence on both sides. As there were 500,000 tenants wanting a fair rent fixed, and as there could only be a small number of Land Courts, this amounted to saying that the whole of the Irish tenants would get fair rents in something under a century!
3. As the majority of Irish tenants had arrears from the bad seasons unpaid to their landlords, and as they could be evicted without appeal for these unpaid rents,—which they could not possibly pay for a long period,—and as Mr. Gladstone made no provision at all for tenants in arrear, just the moiety of the population who were in most distress were rigidly shut out from every chance of relief.
4. There was no provision whatever for the protection of a tenant's right during the long interval between application to the Land Court and the hearing of the case. As soon as a tenant dared to apply for a fair rent, he might get notice to quit!
5. In order to facilitate the division of estates among tenant purchasers, one-fourth of the tenants in number and value could . . . block purchase by the three-fourths!

It was wickedly said that the Land Bill of 1881 resembled considerably one of Mr. Gladstone's famous explanations



which left the matter somewhat more involved than before. It cannot be the object of this narrative to examine all the discussions and developments of a measure which certainly did not settle the question, and which is considered to be such an unendurable stumbling-block that British credit has been pledged for much more than £100,000,000, under the Ashbourne, Wyndham, and Birrell proposals, to promote a system of peasant proprietary in its place. It happens that peasant proprietary was the common alternative demanded both by the Marquis of Salisbury and Mr. Parnell in 1881 instead of Mr. Gladstone's 'temple of litigation.' The litigation was certainly enormous. Every tenant's case having to be supported and opposed by an array of lawyers and witnesses, the 'rush to the Land Courts,' when it did come, made moneyed men of the town and country attorneys of Ireland. The nature of the Land Bill, however, acting in conjunction with other influences, produced effects upon the position of Parnell and the Land Leaguers which, in conjunction also with the unsurpassable awkwardness of Mr. Forster and the angry susceptibility of Mr. Gladstone, produced the most tragic and momentous consequences. Here I have to unravel complications which do not appear to be even suspected by the mob of eulogists on the one side and the other. Yet the case is so clear, and the facts are so convincing, when the plain statement has been made, there is no possibility of another issue to the debate.

The fact that the production of Mr. Gladstone's Land Bill, added to other matters, put Mr. Parnell's ascendancy and the existence of his party in the direst peril, not because it was good, but because it brought such little satisfaction of the immense hopes which the Land League had raised, is a turning-point of recent history in Ireland which is carefully ignored or forgotten. Naturally official Parnellites drop it out of their memories, because their demigod never was anything less than a demigod. Naturally the official Liberals know nothing of a disappointment caused by so perfect a production of Mr. Gladstone's genius. If,



however, we reflect that the Land League had been furiously careering for nearly two years over Ireland, waving a double attraction for the Fenian and the tenant—telling the tenant that he was soon to be a proprietor, telling the Fenian that the end of landlordism meant the end of British Government in Ireland ; if, furthermore, we reflect that Messrs. Devoy, Davitt, Ford, and the Ribbon Fenians generally, had been extracting enormous sums of money from the American believers on the assurance that Parnell had the British Government on the toe of his boot ; we may see that there was something comically tragic in the position of Mr. Parnell getting nothing but another Coercion Act and a tenant's temple of litigation as the net result of all the brag and all the dollars. There was something horribly tragic in the reflexion that Lord Mountmorres and young Mr. Boyd and so many others had been murdered foully and savagely, and that the legislative result was no more than this. Another Coercion Act and a perpetual Litigation Act ! Parnell had brought grist to the lawyer's mill, and was this all ? People in agrarian taprooms and at the cross-roads of villages talked of the alteration since the grand State trials at Dublin only last January, when the jury refused to find Parnell guilty of anything, and when half Dublin ran after his car as he went off to London . . . to bring back so little. It is well to remember that immediately on the breakdown of the State trial on January 25, Mr. Parnell had at once cabled to his trusty and well-beloved *Irish World* at New York, saying : ' Victory for the Land League. Ten against two disagreement of jury equal to acquittal. Thanks to you and your readers for constant co-operation and substantial support. No fear of ultimate success of our good cause.' Where was the good cause now ? Had Parnell and no landlords fizzled out like Daniel O'Connell and repeal ? It was only last September (1880) that he had told the Land League at Ennis : ' The measure of Land Reform will be the measure of your activity this winter.' They had been active with a vengeance. Now 500,000 tenants were to proceed to the

doors of some court-houses, one at a time, and pay rent, till their rents had been revised, or had not, in any time from a year to many years. There might be landlords in Ireland till next century, and a British Government too !

The biographer of Mr. Parnell—whose main fault is in what he omits, while his records are generally accurate—frankly admits that Parnell was in a highly unpleasant situation. He had called on the Ribbon Fenians to desert Butt ‘because Butt was no match for the Government.’ Was he? ‘Parnell’s position,’ says Mr. Barry O’Brien, ‘was one of extreme difficulty. . . . To have accepted the Land Bill cordially would certainly have caused divisions in his own ranks.’ At that time I had correspondents at Galway, both town and county, in County Waterford, in Belfast, in Derry and Donegal, several in Dublin ; gentlemen of intelligence and experience, Nationalist Home Rulers of the school of noble old Butt ; priests and laymen. They all deplored the silly Coercion Act. ‘What was wanted was summary jurisdiction for blackguards.’ They regretted that the Land Bill was so full of litigation and uncertainty. But they all added, that the genuine firebrands of the district, the men who were said to be at the bottom of all the crime and intimidation, were simply furious, ‘because the Parnellites were doing nothing. The Government was no more afraid of Parnell than of Shaw. Perhaps Parnell had been squared. Sure, everybody knew that his estates were over head and ears.’ The sort of men whom Parnell had got to revile and reject Butt were quite ready to fly at him too. Extreme politicians are exposed to this sort of ingratitude. And there was eminent danger of evaporation of the dollar ! To quote Parnell’s biographer again : ‘With the passing of the Land Bill Parnell’s difficulties increased. His American allies, as represented by Ford and the *Irish World*, did not wish the Bill to become law ; they did not wish to see it in force. Parnell was resolved not to quarrel with his American allies, *whose contributions filled the coffers of the League.*’ All through the country

the Land League branches were humming and fizzing with excitement. The organisers of demonstrations and boycottings felt themselves defrauded of their own authority by the failure of Parnell. They had been bragging of their power and their chief's power to bring England to her knees, to drive the landlord garrison into the sea, to make and keep the 'Court of the League' the law of the land. After all, Parnell had never done anything but talk. They could keep a grip on the land, and settle with opponents, without his help, if he was not able to do more than this. All those cowardly tyrants were ready to rend the man whom they used to believe to have a power to win the kind of victories which they wanted.

How did Parnell save his position? Very simply. By provoking the Sassenach to make a glorious martyr of him and to suppress the Land League, which was become a danger to him as much as to the peace of Ireland. The latter was of no importance, but the former affected Parnell painfully. Here let me quote, a little out of its order, the testimony of Mr. Michael Davitt himself on the service, the decisive service, to Parnellism which Mr. Forster had done in suppressing the Land League, as the Land League was constituted in 1881. Of course, a league was necessary to Parnell and Parnellism, and one of the first things which he did on getting out of Kilmainham in 1882 was to reconstitute, on a safer basis for him, and under the new name of the National League, the agitating and boycotting organisation which Mr. Forster had so opportunely suppressed. I knew, of course, how welcome the suppression of the Land Leaguers outside of Kilmainham had been to the Land League chiefs, some of them at any rate, imprisoned inside of Kilmainham. The gentlemen at liberty intended to show their practical sympathy with the gentlemen in confinement by doing the business of the Land League for them—dispensing with the revered and regretted chiefs, in fact. 'We shall be outdistanced by all sorts of scum before this brute Forster lets us out,' was the faithful though forcible expression of the opinion of the



incarcerated martyrs, as they realised that other Daniels might come to judgment while they were idly consuming the limited luxuries of first-class misdemeanants, or words to that effect. And the imprisoned chief above all knew that there were dark and designing nobodies in plenty who were capable of initiating courses of violent folly which could never suit his book, but which might throw him in the shade completely down along the Bowery and in certain collecting-offices of Chicago and New York. To run those ticklish yokefellows, an open organisation and a hidden organisation, is a ticklish operation, and in coarser hands might easily provoke catastrophes. O blessed day when Forster closed the offices of the Land League, and when a viceregal proclamation sent the plotters against Parnell scurrying off to safety! 'We are saved anyhow,' sighed the grateful chiefs around the uncrowned king, as the morning edition of the *Freeman's Journal* brought the sad news of the last brutality of a brutal administration to the patriots comparing notes within restful Kilmainham. At the time of my action for libel against the *Times* I wanted to satisfy myself of Davitt's recollection of the facts of his release, and of the communications made to him by the representative of Parnell sent to meet him at Portland. I had been informed that when Davitt—who had been closely segregated from all news since his arrest in February 1881—heard from Mr. O'Kelly, M.P., that Forster had completely suppressed the Land League on Parnell's issuing the no-rent manifesto in October, he exclaimed, 'What ruin for the cause!' To his initial surprise, however, Mr. O'Kelly had bluntly replied, 'And a benedicted good job, too.' The explanation followed, at least an explanation followed, which left Davitt more or less edified. I wrote to Davitt in August 1887 to know if it was as I had heard. Here is the sentence from Davitt's reply which deals with our present matter :—

Mr. O'Kelly did say, coming from Portland on the 6th of May, that the suppression of the League was a service to the national cause.



Mr. Davitt knew me thoroughly as a rooted and unchanging enemy of his deepest principles of Socialism and social revolution. He denounced me innumerable times, in private and in public, as an Irish Tory, a would-be aristocrat, a feudal economist, a toady of the landlords, an unpractical politician, &c. He had one phrase for Parnell, which meant an immensity in his mouth : ‘Parnell could be a very mean man.’ Now Davitt was never mean. He was a revolutionist without alloy. He was a man that I could not possibly take as a co-worker in any national movement, for he lacked the very conception of nationality. He was a well-meaning, Socialist ex-workman from Lancashire ; honest according to his lights ; violent and passionate ; but a man who loved truth, who loved humanity, and who was a wonderfully honest man. A couple of years before he died, he said to me : ‘Mr. O’Donnell, I could get you back to Irish politics to-morrow, if you gave up your feudalism.’ ‘My dear Mr. Davitt, there are no politics in Ireland, and I am not a feudalist . . . unfortunately.’

Now that the readers of this narrative have the core and centre of Mr. Parnell’s policy after the Coercion and Land Acts of 1881, it will be interesting to know how he put into execution the plans for becoming a martyr, and for getting rid of his outworn tool and dangerous rival, the Land League. He counted, as frequently in his career, on the buoyant simplicity of the British Government as well as on the refreshing verdure of the Irish community ; and he did not count in vain. At the time of his surreptitious intrigue with Mrs. O’Shea, it was learned with some amusement that he occasionally employed in his visits and journeyings the alias of ‘Mr. Fox.’ Yes, with many high qualities, Parnell was decidedly foxy ; which does not imply that he was either a lion or a tiger. But he could be wolfish at the call of appetite. All which does not shake my deliberate judgment that there was a brave and capable Irishman spoiled when the Ribbon Fenians, headed by Devoy and Davitt, showed him the kingdoms of the earth to be his, if only he would bow down to the social revolution and

abandon the clean programme of Home Rule, which united landlords and tenants, the sons of men who had crossed the Boyne with William of Orange and the sons of men who had ridden for the Stuart Crown and the Bourbon Lilies from Limerick to Almanza and Fontenoy. From the charge of the Irish Brigade to the boycotters and the cowtailers, what a fall was there !

By the time that the Land Bill had approached its third reading, the discontent with Parnell's leadership, the furious sense of disappointment at the outcome of so much boasting and so much disturbance of every kind, made even the Directory of the Land League at Dublin no longer a safe citadel for the depreciated chief. Men who used to swear by his genius and daring now called him only a figure-head. The truth was, on the contrary, that he was a figure-head no longer. The vain and ambitious beginner whom the Matthew Harrises of Ireland and Irish America wanted 'because he was a landlord and a Protestant,' 'because he was a bit of a county gentleman,' had learned by experience, and had been taught by power ; while his wits had been sharpened by daily contact with a Sexton, a Healy, a T. P. O'Connor, a J. J. O'Kelly, all the band of brilliant and shrewd, capable and cautious have-nots on the make, who had first represented the forces of Anglo-Irish demagogism and unrest, and who had become the intimates and counsellors of Englishmen, Englishmen of pride and culture, possessing influence far beyond the dreams of the most aspiring of them. Parnell was grown a subtle, daring, calculating, hard and cynical manipulator of men. If he had not been self-indulgent as well as self-centred, he would never, perhaps, have gone down to extinction with the heel of a churchman pressing his neck ; the heels of two churchmen, I might say ; for the dissenting preacher had the precedence of the Catholic priest, even though the dissenter would have been worse than helpless without the austere politicians of the Irish altar.

Without a moment's hesitation Parnell repeated against the third reading the disapproving manœuvre which he

had executed against the second reading of the Bill. He and his party walked out without a vote. But he knew that more was required, for he had abstained on the second reading already, and still they questioned his unbending patriotism at Dublin. On the evening of August 1, 1881, he deliberately picked a quarrel with the Speaker. The business of the rest of the session was under discussion. Parnell demanded yet another day for an Irish debate on coercion and Forster, to wit! He swept over the whole field of the past and future. The Speaker at first gently warned him of decided irrelevance. Parnell assumed his most defiant air and enlarged the irrelevance. I was looking at him not two yards away. We all said to ourselves, 'Parnell is spoiling for a fight.' Again and again the Speaker admonished. Parnell deliberately insulted the Chair, accusing the Speaker of sympathising with 'the powers that be' and trampling on 'all liberty and private right.' The poor Speaker hardly believed his eyes and ears. He named Mr. Parnell. 'That's what he wanted all along,' said a man who loved him not—Mr. Callan, M.P. for Louth. It was true. With a melodramatic swing and flounce, Parnell retorted that he 'called the public to witness that you refuse me freedom of discussion,' and flung out of the House, 'without waiting for the farce of a division.' He could not afford to lose a moment's time. It was getting on for half-past seven o'clock. He jumped into a hansom, and caught the Irish mail quite comfortably at Euston. The executive of the Land League, full of discontent and rebellion, was sitting in the head office, meditating the great news in the Dublin morning papers of the dauntless defiance by the daring chief, when the door opened, and in walked Parnell himself, rested and refreshed, and showing his icy indignation at the unprovoked outrage of a minion of the oppressor against the elect of the Irish nation. The talk of censure vanished. Parnell got bands of music instead. But there was a lot more to do. It was not only Mr. Callan who was saying that 'Parnell wanted it' for some purpose of his own. It took more than that to make



a martyr. The taste of the patriots was getting cloyed with delicacies of the sort. An advocatus diaboli stood or sat in every bar to show cause against the genuineness of the miracle.

A public demonstration of contempt for Gladstone and England, addressed to his ally Mr. Patrick Ford, was the next step in the manœuvre. Mr. Parnell knew that it would reach other eyes than those of the sympathetic auxiliary who wanted to burn London, including its women and children. One fine day in the middle of September the British Ambassador at Washington sent a cablegram to the British Premier in Downing Street, through the proper channels of course, to announce that a violent dispatch from Mr. Parnell was flaming in the front pages of the *Irish World*, in which the Land League leader declared the resolve of the League to oppose the new Land Act, to oppose the fixing of fair rents, to oppose all access to the Land Courts, to keep on the old lines of lawless independence and to do the old work. 'Vous pouvez voir la tête du Premier Ministre.' Mr. Gladstone was thoroughly disgusted at the old work, and he distinctly admired his new Land Act. All his emotions as an author and a Christian statesman were outraged by the cynical atrocity of Mr. Parnell's communication to Mr. Ford. The American press agencies hastened to furnish the British side of the Atlantic with the text.

PARNELL to *Irish World*.

DUBLIN: Sept. 17, 1881.

Land League Convention closed after three days' session. Resolutions adopted for national self-government, land for the people, tenants not to use Land Act rent clauses, *but to follow the old lines and rely on the old methods* for obtaining justice. The executive of the League empowered to select test cases in order to prove to tenants worthlessness of the new Act.

There can be no doubt that, looking to the history of the old lines and the old methods, this was as cynical a piece

of social and political blackguardism as ever adorned the history of agitation.

Columns and pages of ferocious and incendiary vituperation in the new Parnellite press forced home on the public mind of Ireland the purport of the old methods appeal. The new Parnellite press had been lately established as a special engine devised by Mr. Parnell in person for coping with the situation as the situation affected him and his prospects. While Mr. Ford was fittingly informed that never, never would Mr. Parnell surrender the certainty of the American dollar for the unsubstantial charms of an English Parliamentary Land Bill, a portion of the dollars had been employed in the realisation of a grand scheme for the inflammation of the Irish populace, by the very old method of a subsidised press. Michael Davitt's opinion that Mr. Parnell could be on occasion 'a very mean man' was certainly exemplified in the circumstances attending the foundation of *United Ireland*, the new organ of misrepresentation and menace. For the best part of half a century the name and mission of the famous *Nation* of Young Ireland days had been maintained by Alexander and T. D. Sullivan, well known and respected in the House of Commons for Irish patriotism combined with readiness to aid every good cause. The prosperity of the *Nation* and its cheaper comrade the *Weekly News* was prosperity to the Sullivans; and a large body of readers supported papers which aimed at considerable culture and an invariable tone of delicacy and moral excellence. Making use of the moneys from America without even obtaining the sanction of the Land League Council, Mr. Parnell founded *United Ireland* as the organ of the vast confederacy under the League's banner, but really as his personal instrument, and by its subsidised competition injured seriously the Sullivans. In a notice of the transaction written by Mr. T. D. Sullivan, the story is shortly told: 'This purchase was effected with the funds of the League. . . . This transaction was secretly planned and silently effected. I was a member of the executive of the Land League at the time,

but I got no hint of the project until the arrangements had been completed, and the new journal was about to be launched. The proceeding was unfair to the *Nation* and to me.' The first number of *United Ireland* appeared on August 13, 1881, under the editorship of Mr. William O'Brien. Parnell had now in his hands precisely the journal which was fit to support the old methods when Mr. Parnell himself should have retired into the shelter of Kilmainham, and assumed the halo of expedient martyrdom.

With the enormous publicity of the cheap and incendiary sheet—permeating every parish of the island—thoroughly secured in his own personal control; with the huge subsidies from America assured by the old methods cablegram to Patrick Ford; and with the safe receipt of the dollars secured by Patrick Egan, the Land League treasurer, residing permanently in Paris—whither he was sent on the introduction of the Coercion Act—Parnell had now concentrated in his own immediate power the whole direction, journalistic and financial, as well as administrative, of the old methods movement from one border of Ireland to the other. If anything were to happen to the Land League organisation, Parnell would be sole representative and ruler, without even an executive council to limit his autocracy. It only remained to get into Kilmainham and to get the Land League suppressed. Then he would be a Cromwell without even a Rump Parliament. Parnell knew that it was now very easy to get into Kilmainham, as easy as to get named by the Speaker. It only required a little judicious provocation. It was thoroughly well understood that Mr. Gladstone was determined to get fair play for his new Land Act. The question of the goodness or badness of the Land Act cannot affect our conviction of the transparent honesty and earnestness of its eminent author. Disgusted and appalled by the savageries of Land Leaguism since 1879, convinced that by the acceptance of his Land Reform the Irish tenantry would be protected from injustice and dissuaded from illegality, the great Liberal Premier was determined, with the whole intensity



of his virile nature, to get fair play for so needed a measure. He wanted nothing but fair play, but that he must have. We all knew the white-hot fire of his convictions on this point. On July 14, in reply to some unlicked taunts of Mr. Healy, which had already produced a vehement rebuke from John Bright, Mr. Gladstone arose, and, as an organ of extreme impartiality records, 'in a speech of extraordinary passion,' smote the obstructives hip and thigh for their efforts to block the Bill, 'after they had miserably failed in their attempts to destroy its popularity in Ireland.' Mr. Parnell knew that he had before him a great and honest statesman, laden with sore responsibility, and absolutely certain to defend that responsibility at the immediate expense of the man who should come between the Irish tenantry and a just law of protection and pacification. 'Bedad, Gladstone's ready to go off like a powder barrel.' Parnell's manœuvre was infallibly sure of success. Already the atrocious cablegram to Patrick Ford announcing the resumption of the old methods and the opposition to the Land Courts made the next development decisive. It was agreed between Forster and Gladstone that, at an important meeting at Leeds, the Premier should address a final warning to the agitator, of such extreme gravity that he must understand that immediate submission and good behaviour were his only way to escape imprisonment in Kilmainham. Both the distinguished old statesmen entirely omitted to suspect that Parnell just wanted to be imprisoned. Imprisonment was the crowning move of his present game. I remember a wicked saying of the late Lord Morris of Killanin, who was not an optimist on Irish patriotism, that 'the whole throuble between England and Ireland was the contist of an honest and stupid people thryin' not to be bate by a clever but dishonest people.' The Lord Chief Justice of Ireland cultivated a most magnificent brogue, which, according to his worst enemies, was the most patriotic thing about him. I cannot confirm the observation of the eminent servant of the law. Still, we certainly have produced some picturesque rascals, and

England a few political simpletons of mark, at least in Irish affairs. Mr. Gladstone was one of the greatest and best of English parliamentarians, but he had not quite understood the actual claimant for Government hospitality. At the speech at Leeds the solemn warning was duly given. Parnell was admonished that 'the resources of civilisation' were waiting to take him by the collar at the very next provocation. Parnell now knew for sure and certain that he had only one further provocation to give. So he gave it.

With gravely exquisite absurdity Mr. Forster had written to Mr. Gladstone after the Leeds Communion Service, that it was possible that Parnell's reply might be 'a treasonable outburst,' in which case he simply must be arrested 'on suspicion of treasonable practices.' And neither of these weighty English statesmen perceived that Parnell had only to cross to Holyhead, and deliver his reply at any meeting of the Confederation from the Grampians to the Scilly Islands, and the Coercion Act could not touch him out of Ireland. Why was he keeping in Ireland? Because he wanted to get well-and-truly imprisoned before all men's eyes, before the eyes of the American subscribers. So Parnell made his reply in Ireland, in Wexford, a reply full of bitter and insulting taunts to Mr. Gladstone, 'this masquerading knight-errant,' full of defiance of 'the perfidious and cruel and relentless English enemy,' full of bold refusals to 'disband,' full of the 'advancing determination of the Irish people to regain for themselves their lost land and their legislative independence.' A fiercely defiant, and insulting, and provocative speech. Provocative beyond all doubt, but the most legal speech which Parnell had made for two years. It was quite open to Mr. Forster to 'reasonably suspect' treasonable designs in it. The Coercion Act authorised him to 'reasonably suspect' the existence of an elephant in a baby's perambulator. The two old statesmen were horribly angry. It is understood that the matter which prepared their resolution was an instruction to the Land League Convention of September 26 at

Maryborough, written by Parnell himself, and instructing the Leaguers that 'no member should apply to the court to fix his rent without previous consultation with, *and obtaining the consent of*, the branch of the League to which he belongs.' This was flat dictation, indeed, . . . just such as the League had used for two years already. A warrant of arrest was executed on the morning of October 13, and Parnell was carried by an escort of Dublin police to the prison of Kilmainham. Martyrdom, real, authentic martyrdom, for having defied 'the power of the cruel and perfidious and relentless English enemy!' There was the glorious news for the American subscribers. There was the crushing response to the murmurers against Parnell's patriotism and independence. The *Irish World* exhausted itself in special editions. All Irishmen got horribly angry. Speaking personally, I was as beautifully duped as Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Forster. I took Parnell's arrest as punishment for opposition to the Land Act and the Coercion Act; and I held, like almost every Irishman in the world, that it was treating an Irish member in the way that Mr. Chamberlain or Mr. Bradlaugh would not be treated. I read the Wexford speech over and over again. There was not a word in it that Parnell had not said a score of times in the House of Commons. Within forty-eight hours I was in Dublin, flinging my hostility to Land Leaguism and Parnellism to the four winds, and determined on one thing alone: to oppose English differential treatment of Ireland by every honourable means in my power. It was a fundamental silliness of the Coercion Act that its blind warrants never gave the grounds of its arrests. If, at any time, Parnell had been avowedly and openly arrested for 'the old methods,' or for 'boycotting like lepers,' or anything of that sort, it would have stirred Irishmen very differently. Now all we knew was, that apparently an Irish member of Parliament, the chairman of the party, had been arrested without evidence or sentence for miscalling Mr. Gladstone and for demanding legislative independence. I found Dublin hot, and I did my best to make it hotter. The



police tried to arrest me at the doors of my hotel for protesting against undeniable brutality to passers on the pavement. I resumed all my old functions of vice-president of the Confederation which I had disused since many months, and which I had intended never to use again. From Dublin I organised a great meeting of Irishmen in Liverpool, at which I spoke, detailing the display of armed force in Dublin, the fierce passion of the nation, the resolution to make the imprisonment of Parnell a turning-point in English history. I hurried to the head offices at London. All the Parnellite members of Parliament were gone or retired. Many fled to Paris. Some went on a mission to America. The whole administration of the Irish electoral organisation in Great Britain fell again into my hands. Within a month an election at Stafford gave an opportunity for using Irish electoral power in a contest between Whig and Tory. I ordered all Irish votes to be cast against Mr. Gladstone's candidate. I went personally to Stafford to conduct the election on the Irish side. The voting was close. Liberals and Conservatives were evenly balanced enough. In vain the Liberals declared green their election colour. 'Vote against Green Gladstonians,' was my order. We had only 150 votes, but in the close balance between Tories and Liberals the Irish gave the seat for Stafford to a Conservative, Mr. Salt, who had been also very indignant at the excesses of coercion in Ireland.

What greatly increased the pleasure of the Irish people at the news of the defeat of the Liberal candidate at Stafford was the circumstance that I had been very vigorously hissed by a large Liberal crowd on the day before the polling, from which it was reasonably concluded that Mr. Gladstone's supporters were very angry at the Irish opposition, a matter that delighted the Irish very much. But what added immensely to the affair was that the *Times* had most thoughtfully rubbed the moral into the Liberal party by reminding them that the same Irish Confederation which had now put them out of Stafford had largely contributed to their victory at the general election less than two years

before. Said the *Times* in a leading article of its issue of November 21, 1881 :—

While Mr. Salt polled 252 votes more than he obtained at the general election, Mr. Howell polled 313 less than the highest Liberal obtained on the occasion. . . . The most fatal blow to Mr. Howell's pretensions was the withdrawal of the Irish vote, with which the adherents of Mr. Gladstone are everywhere threatened. It must not be forgotten that the Irish vote was cast against Lord Beaconsfield's supporters in 1880, and that it turned the scale in favour of the Liberals in many of the large towns.

That was really very nicely and thoughtfully said on the part of the leading journal, and contributed to increase the dissatisfaction with which the left wing of the Liberal party regarded the result of the curious mixture of pacification and exasperation which Mr. Gladstone had been induced to administer to Ireland. I was told that the defeated candidate, who had lost an apparent certainty, continued to speak very severely of me. I suppose I have helped at least a hundred Britons to become representatives of their dear native land, and they never spoke flattering things of me, after all. The general comment of my members was : ' Oh, they talk about the Irish vote. I know it did not count in my case.'

The result of the Stafford election made a great stir in Ireland. It was the first blow against coercion. I have a doggerel that was sung to the tune of the *Shan Van Vocht*, a famous rebel air.

How could we leave Parnell,  
Says the Shan Van Vocht ?  
How could we leave Parnell,  
Says the Shan Van Vocht ?  
How could we leave Parnell,  
Who fought for us so well,  
And stayed eviction fell ;  
Says the Shan Van Vocht ?

Don't lose a single vote,  
Says the Shan Van Vocht ;  
Don't lose a single vote,  
Says the Shan Van Vocht.  
At Freedom's battle-note,  
Spring at the tyrant's throat,  
And smite as Stafford smote,  
Says the Shan Van Vocht.

After all, the spring at the tyrant's throat was to assume the strictly constitutional form of smiting 'as Stafford smote,' namely, through the ballot-box.

Meantime, the second part of Mr. Parnell's programme had also been fulfilled. Mr. Forster had been got to suppress the Land League! Result: the whole of the Land League organisation and authority was now centred, without let or hindrance, in two men—Mr. Parnell, sole autocrat by right of persecution and martyrdom; and Mr. Egan, sole treasurer at Paris, who was commissioned to fulfil the policy of Mr. Parnell with the lavish liberality permitted by the increasing subscriptions from Mr. Ford, now increasing by leaps and bounds. Perhaps I ought to add a third man as furnished with a delegated authority by Mr. Parnell himself in a message to Mr. Patrick Ford; and this third man is Mr. T. P. O'Connor, M.P. In a letter immediately preceding his final provocation to Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Parnell had taken the additional precaution against dissension of having himself represented by a trusty agent among the American subscribers, namely, by the future president of the Irish League in Great Britain. In this letter of October 1, 1881, to Mr. Patrick Ford, the coming martyr and autocrat thus announced to the dynamite treasurer that Mr. Thomas P. O'Connor would be his special delegate and representative: 'Mr. T. P. O'Connor will start for America early in October, and will represent my views and those of the Irish organisation.'

With regard to the termination of this visit of Mr. Parnell's special delegate, Mr. Patrick Ford relates in the *Irish World* the following trait concerning the ties of financial fondness which united Mr. Parnell and Mr. Ford:—

Mr. O'Connor sat in the office of the *Irish World*, Brooklyn, on the night before he sailed for Ireland, and informed us that Mr. Parnell told him that the first subscription that was ever paid into the organisation came from Transatlantic.

Transatlantic was a writer-name for Mr. Ford. Sweet communion of co-operative operators!



After managing his own incarceration so smoothly and dexterously, the suppression of the Land League was managed in the same simple and masterly manner. Parnell found that Messrs. Egan and Ford were in favour of the issue of a no-rent manifesto. It was a rather extreme step, but Messrs. Egan and Ford always preferred the extreme. Mr. Parnell saw a happy opportunity of pleasing his treasurer and his paymaster and at the same time giving another provocation to the British Government, which had already shown itself so useful and accommodating. He approved, accordingly, of the no-rent manifesto, which was issued forthwith; and forthwith the British Government, still anxious to oblige, suppressed the Land League and imprisoned as many of its officials as it could catch. Parnell was now, indeed, the uncrowned king. No organisation existed within the Irish party in Parliament or out of Parliament to interfere in the slightest degree with his supremacy. The Land League itself was suppressed! 'And a benedicted good job, too,' said the confidant of the autocrat's design. Until the trouble of the Divorce Court, Parnell was fixed without Irish rival or possibility of rivalry upon the destinies of Ireland. The British Government had so thoroughly eradicated all possible opposition to his ascendancy, that even had he been less prudent in packing his subsequent leagues and conventions, it would have been almost impossible to dislodge him. But Parnell himself was prudent—with one exception. He knew that he had been still young and far less known when the Land League of Davitt and Devoy adopted him in 1879. It was the Land League which had taken him up. He had not chosen the Land League; rather the Land League had chosen him; and its supreme council continued to include men who were capable of *un*-choosing him. That was why he got Gladstone and Forster to abolish it. It would be different next time. *He* would make the next league. *He* would select the next league. No new league could say to him: 'We made you.' The one exception to his prudence was, that though he himself was to stuff his new organisation with

men whom he believed to be his absolute creatures, he forgot entirely that creatures can become independent with the possession of a share of power, and that many a delegated authority has cut the throat of its delegator. He had only smiled at the smouldering Gladstonianism of Healy, and Sexton, and T. P. O'Connor, and Justin McCarthy, as an amiable weakness, when he gave them place and influence in 1885. The smouldering Gladstonianism had developed in 1890. It only wanted the breath of an episcopal fulmination to kindle it into flame.







*Photo: Wm. Lawrence]*

MR. PATRICK EGAN.  
The Treasurer of the Land League.

## CHAPTER XIX

THE SESSION OF 1882—MR. EGAN'S YEAR—MR. PARNELL LIES LOW IN KILMAINHAM AND EGAN PAYS THE *LOCUM TENENS*—THE LIBERAL PROTECTORS—THE LADIES' LAND LEAGUE—CLOSURE IN PARLIAMENT—THE ACT AND THE GENTRY

Lying Low in Kilmainham—Captain Moonlight as *Locum Tenens*—An Invitation to visit Parnell—Kilmainham as Headquarters—Co. Derry Election—'Vote for Porter and Fair Rents'—Messrs. T. P. O'Connor and P. Ford—Madam Moonlight—Coercion *pour rive*—The Allies in the Cabinet—'The Rollers of the Ball'—Undercultivation and Depopulation under the Land Act—Six Points of Injury—'The Rule of Funk'—Shrinkages of Employment and Trade—Why did the Government protect the Foreign Moonlighter Fund?

MR. PARNELL had executed the first part of his programme. He had got into Kilmainham and he had got the suppression of the Land League. Now he stood alone. The next part of the programme was to force or lead Mr. Gladstone to recognise him as necessary to the peace of Ireland, and, consequently, as the power with whom the British Government must negotiate. To subjugate his Irish opponents by getting into Kilmainham and to bring England to terms in order to go out; surely that was a notable bit of strategy or jugglery. The old methods were to come in handy, supplemented by some fresh adaptations and refinements. The general idea of the plan of offence was simple, as usual in practical conceptions. Perhaps I will best allow Mr. Parnell's admiring biographer an opportunity of sketching the outline of his hero's Kilmainham policy. Mr. Barry O'Brien professes to have heard this outline from the lips of 'two Irish members who dined with Parnell on the evening of the Wexford meeting.' It was at the Wexford meeting that Parnell, as we know, gave Gladstone the crowning provocation to send him to prison.

We felt that Parnell was bound to be arrested after this speech, and we thought that he ought to give us some instructions as to the future in case our suspicions should be correct. . . . 'Suppose they arrest you, Mr. Parnell, have you any instructions to give us? Who will take your place?' 'Ah!' he said deliberately, looking through a glass of champagne which he had just raised to his lips. 'Ah! If I am arrested Captain Moonlight will take my place.'—'Life of Parnell,' vol. i, p. 312.

That is a genre picture which perfectly reproduces the net result of fifty conversations of my own with all sorts of Parnellite helpers and agents or allies—members of the Ladies' Land League, members of the suppressed Land League, members of the Parliamentary party, all kinds of shrewd observers and reasoners in a dozen Irish counties, observant Englishmen too—but it is as well to have it in the artistic rendering of an admirer. That delightful touch of the leisurely surveyed and lifted glass of champagne, while the sober reveller smilingly intimated that his retirement would be followed by outrage and intimidation to the extent of fully occupying his own large place in the Irish situation,—that epicurean contemplation of the extension of the old methods, is a luminous illustration of the moral fibre of the man. That glass of champagne, added to the old exhortation to treat Irish opponents as fetid outcasts 'even in the house of worship,' makes all easy to comprehend—the old methods cablegram to Ford, the special mission of T. P. O'Connor, the mission of the Ladies' Land League, the bounteous liberality to crime of Mr. Treasurer Egan from Paris. It was no wonder that my recourse to a British jury in 1888 was artfully undermined, that untold sums were spent on blindfolding the Special Commissions in 1888 and 1889 in order to keep out of the witness-box the hideous revelation of all those complicities.

I did not share those glasses of champagne, and I was neither alarmed nor disturbed when I got a most pressing letter in November from Mr. McGough, the solicitor of the Land League—a respectable and patriotic member of a



Dublin firm—conveying Mr. Parnell's most pressing invitation to visit him in Kilmainham itself. He wanted to consult me about an election which was pending in the County Derry, and at which Mr. Porter, Mr. Gladstone's Irish solicitor-general, was a candidate. 'The way in which I had fought the Stafford election and given the seat to a Tory had been much discussed and admired in Ireland, and the vast demonstration in Hyde Park showed the influence I exercised among Irishmen. He, Mr. McGough, hoped that little differences on minor points of national policy would be forgotten by me in this crisis.' I respected Mr. McGough a good deal. We had been old friends in the Home Rule days. I said to myself: 'So Parnell finds that all his orators have taken leg-bail, and he falls back on the comrade he deserted.' I wired to McGough that I was crossing that night.<sup>1</sup> I was quite clear that, Land League or no Land League, no British Premier had a right to throw Irish representatives into jail on mere *lettres de cachet*.

It was between eleven and twelve the next morning that I was driven to Kilmainham, and was admitted by polite warders after a cursory examination of the permit which Mr. McGough had secured for my visit. It was nothing like a jail, but only a somewhat gloomy and heavily furnished apartment-house which the Government had placed at the disposal of its guests from the Land League. Barring the arbitrariness of the thing, there was little more than discomfort in having to live a few months in a healthy and semi-rural suburb of the Irish capital. 'Coercion' was absolutely ridiculous as a description of this genial parody of a bastille. 'Supposing Forster does put the village ruffians into places like this all over Ireland,' I

<sup>1</sup> In addition to Mr. McGough's letter, I got this urgent telegram from Mr. E. Leamy, M.P. at Derry, who had been sent in advance with Mr. J. Redmond, M.P. I copy the original still in my possession.

'November 25, 1881. From E. Leamy, Roddy's Hotel, Derry, to F. Hugh O'Donnell, 27 Craven Street, Strand, Ldn.

'DO NOT LOSE A MOMENT IN MAKING THE NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS. COME AT ONCE.'

Edmund Leamy was by far the ablest of the young members of the Parnell party, but strangely apathetic . . . or disheartened by what he saw.

reflected with bitter amusement, 'how on earth does he fancy that such coercion-in-cottonwool will deter any ruffian in the country?' There must have been hundreds of thousands of Irishmen who had never been so well housed nor so well fed in all their lives; not to mention the total absence of the lightest labour. Poor dear old Forster's lion-roar might have proceeded from the reality of the most harmless prize wether outside Smithfield. So far as crime could be affected, this was the merest comedy of repression.

There was already a considerable crowd of suspects in Kilmainham, to several of whom I was introduced. They seemed very decent persons, and I was assured that there was absolutely no foundation for any charge against several. There was a rougher element also who seemed to be highly elated and distinguished at being State prisoners on such easy terms. I saw Messrs. Dillon, O'Brien, and O'Kelly, also Mr. Sexton. Here it was easy to recognise the galling absurdity and insulting folly of taking these gentlemen from their usual way of life, and shutting them in here. If the object was to limit their influence, it had immensely increased that influence. Between visitors and letters, they could use the widest freedom of counsel and direction; and that counsel and direction were not likely to be more advantageous to the British Government by issuing from a State prison. Though only five or six weeks incarcerated, these gentlemen, never very robust, seemed to have grown pallid and worn with the monotony and confinement. I found Parnell wearing the same bored look, and apparently not very well. He could be a *charmeur* when he chose, and he was quite the old comrade again. He said that it was most kind of me to come, especially as I disapproved so much of his proceedings. This was said with the most winning ingenuousness. My victory at Stafford had been a great stroke, especially as it showed that the Tories were quite ready to profit by Irish votes. This view had struck myself as the most valuable lesson from Stafford. But Parnell said that the Dublin people were best pleased by the

great demonstration which the Confederation had carried out in Hyde Park against the imprisonment of the members. Parnell said that it was well known that now I was the Confederation again; and he laughed as we mentioned the most distinguished refugees of the party who had sought safety in France and America. We agreed that they were quite right. Even the indomitable Biggar was bound for the Boulevards.<sup>1</sup>

Then, when he thought that he had sufficiently mollified me, Parnell said: 'I have some hope that we could do the Stafford trick in Derry. Tories and Liberals are not far apart in numbers, so long as the Catholics support the Liberals as usual. If now we could get the Catholics to vote Tory or, as it is there, to vote Orange, we have a good chance. Of course, to get Derry Catholics to vote Orange would be a miracle; but you might be able to do it. You have a high Catholic reputation. Your family is Donegal and Derry. You might rouse the patriotism of the Catholics by the Coercion Act. Will you try? We will never forget it.' I told Parnell that I resented the Coercion Act and the imprisonment of Irish members with the utmost intensity, and I thought I could make some impression on the Catholic farmers of County Derry. But Gladstone's solicitor-general might promise a favourable choice of sub-commissioners for the cases of the Presbyterian farmers, who usually were what is called Orange Presbyterians; and in this way, for every Catholic who voted Orange there would be a couple of Orange Presbyterians voting Liberal. Besides, I pointed out that the Tory candidate belonged to none of the historic houses, Hamiltons, Hills, Stewarts, &c., but was only a rich squatter from Australia. I feared that my intervention would

<sup>1</sup> While Biggar was in Paris, he succumbed to the mature charms of an Irish lady resident, a Miss Highland; and as he was a very wealthy man, a breach-of-promise suit resulted. London had the time of its life when the genial little humpback obstructionist appeared as a breaker of hearts. His gruff protest to pestering M.P.'s, 'All nonsense, sir. I never was more than civil to the woman,' was wildly cheered. The gay Biggar had to pay damages. He never lost the popularity he gained in that sentimental hour.



only be a picnic, for I did not see the grounds of success which I had in Stafford. Parnell replied : ' Not a chance ought to be neglected. If we invade Ulster this year, we may get the benefit another year. Would I go ? Leamy and Redmond wanted me urgently. He, Parnell, would be deeply obliged. It would be a nice thing of me to take so much trouble.' I repeated that I was anti-coercionist to the hilt. So it was agreed that I should bear his earnest commission to all Derrymen to vote against coercion. As there was a Catholic Ulsterman named Mr. Charles Dempsey in the field already, Parnell wrote for me his promise to give Dempsey a seat in Parliament at the first opportunity, in return for his retiring in our favour now.

Having arranged the outlines of the campaign in Derry, we talked about affairs in England. Parnell said that he would support me to the utmost in the policy, which I explained to him, of keeping the Confederation in England outside of everything which could give the slightest excuse for Government prosecution. Though there was no Coercion Act in England, there were English juries ; and I said that it might not be easy to rebuild the electoral organisation if once it was dislocated by police proceedings.

I surmised that Parnell must find Kilmainham monotonous, if restful. ' Infernally monotonous, and not a bit restful. I am pestered about every fiddle-faddle ; and everybody from north to south, who comes here, must see me. Give me Piccadilly for quiet, compared to here,' smiled Parnell. ' *Then why did you get arrested ?* ' It was only a happy thought, suggested by the talk and bearing of some of the other State prisoners rather than by Parnell's own manner ; though that seemed curiously complacent too. Parnell started, examined me a moment, and answered : ' When the followers were being jailed, the leader could not be only thinking of his personal comfort. Could he ? ' I agreed that his step was a popular one. He had admitted that his retirement from outside was voluntary. I gave

him all the London gossip he wanted. He was thoroughly charming all through. So we parted; I for the Derry election.

It turned out as I expected. The Solicitor-General placarded the county with notices: 'Vote for Porter and Fair Rents.' A farmer's man was ostentatiously named 'land sub-commissioner' in a neighbouring district. Though the Catholics voted splendidly alongside of their hereditary enemies the Orangemen, in order to beat the coercionist, the Presbyterian Tories streamed into Porter's camp, and 'Porter and Fair Rents' won the day. I had a very pleasant time at the polling-booths of Limavady, famous for Thackeray's 'Peg'—and once clan seat of the O'Kanes—where I shared agency duty with the Master of the local Orange Lodge, a splendid Irishman, who said that Ulstermen would never be against Home Rule if we kept the priests out of it. 'Let them stick to their chapels.' I amassed many valuable observations during this season in Ireland under coercion. That was my sole gain. I never saw any earnest of the promised gratitude from Parnell; and even Mr. Charles Dempsey, whom I got to retire on Parnell's written promise to give him a seat another time, never saw the promise fulfilled. I heard young Redmond and Leamy make some of their very best speeches in this hillside campaign. Edmund Leamy, in particular, made a speech to the Inishowen men, gathered at Carndonagh—where my own father was born at the beginning of the century—which, recalling the national traditions of O'Donnells and O'Neills, here in their northern home, with the mountain passes and the mountain rivers which they held against Plantagenet and Tudor all around us, was one of the most moving and richly eloquent improvisations that I have ever heard. His invocation of the memory and death of young Sir Cahir O'Doherty, last independent chief of his name, worked the wildest enthusiasm in a crowd, two-thirds of whom were O'Doherties.

While I only did my duty as a Nationalist in opposing a coercionist ministry, at the same time I could not fail

to recognise that something was occurring to produce a degree of exasperation far beyond the annoyance and indignation of coercion. There was no doubt that the American money was pouring into Ireland through various channels, and there was general satisfaction in the party of the members from Ireland at the fidelity shown by the Irish exiles to the cause of the motherland. The mission of Mr. T. P. O'Connor was the object of general praise, and the manner in which that expert speaker adapted himself to his American audiences revealed the capacity of a popular diplomatist. I heard it stated by Irish Americans who heard him on this mission that 'Mr. T. P. O'Connor was the finest platform orator who ever came to America from the old country.' Beyond all doubt he was reaping tremendous applause at this time at every Irish meeting which he attended in the United States. Out there he professed to make no concealment of the Parnellite designs to destroy, and not to reform, the new Land Act. 'Gladstone's Land Act and the Land League were precisely on opposite principles.' From California to Kansas, from Kansas to Chicago and New York, he spread the joyous news that the tenants were refusing to pay rents and that it would not be advisable for any man, or ten thousand men, to occupy farms from which the soldiers of 'no rent' had been evicted. The Ribbon Fenians in America wanted their Irish news hot and strong, and Mr. T. P. O'Connor consulted their tastes. I was convinced that Mr. T. P. O'Connor immensely exaggerated Mr. Parnell's real feelings towards the Gladstone land legislation. If Mr. Gladstone would only seek the assistance of Mr. Parnell, Mr. Parnell was quite ready to propose such reasonable reforms and amendments as Mr. Gladstone himself might not hesitate to accept. Until, however, he could take the arm of the British Premier, Mr. Parnell felt he must continue to depend upon the arm, and the purse, of the American Land League and Company. Mr. T. P. O'Connor was certainly doing a highly appreciated work in continuing to paint in appropriate colours the



portrait of the iron and irreconcilable chief for the generous audiences collected by Mr. Devoy and Mr. Ford.<sup>1</sup>

As time wore on without any improvement in the situation, as 1881 became 1882, it was evident that new causes of exasperation had been added to all which had existed in 1879 and 1880. Though the no-rent manifesto was almost universally a failure, and though the vast majority of the tenantry were paying rents with entire honesty and punctuality, a certain number had obeyed the manifesto, and were being evicted in consequence. Over a large area, besides, the existence of arrears from former years made the working of the Land Act, as it was, practically impossible, and was encouraging panic-struck landlords to panic-struck severities. In almost the whole of the literature which has arisen on the subject of the disturbance in Ireland at this repulsive epoch, it is rare to find any recognition of the fact that, after all, the Irish landlords were more or less men, with the hopes, fears, responsibilities, affections, and animosities of other men. The Land Act of 1881 was avowedly based upon the postulate—which was perfectly true—that very bad landlords were an exception, and that, accordingly, gradual

<sup>1</sup> I am bound to condemn the effort of some critics to doubt the sincerity of T. P. O'Connor's lurid narratives of the trouble in Ireland. Whatever portions of his oratory were merely artistic effect or calculated appeal to a generosity excitable under treatment, it would be unfair to question the intense radicalism of Mr. T. P. O'Connor's deepest convictions. After more than a quarter of a century, he might still be found the other day imprecating, in *Reynolds's Newspaper* of September 19, 1909, the following compliments on the House of Lords :—

'This odious, selfish and stupid anachronism, which lies like *some hideous vampire* over the aspirations of England, in its toiling masses; over Ireland demanding Home Rule; over Wales asking for religious equality; over Scotland praying for land reform—*this hideous vampire* would at last have delivered itself into the hands of the people.'

Mr. O'Connor's critics, who have ascribed to interested motives his hot advocacy of the Land League, should surely recognise not only strong but violent convictions in this passage. It was precisely his rooted sympathy with the Bradlaugh wing which originally made me deny his utility to a nation which required reconciliation instead of rancour. He denounces the 'vampires' of England to-day in *Reynolds's Newspaper* with the same whole-heartedness with which, nearly thirty years ago, he 'showed' to the Ribbon Fenians of Chicago the vampires on Irish estates. The consistency attested by a profession of the same ideas during thirty years must be accepted as genuine, without reference to the ideas.

and, as it were, leisurely resort to a fair-rent court would meet the essential requirements of such a situation. Mr. Gladstone seemed to forget that there was a revolutionary organisation come into existence with the aid of vast sums of outside money, which forced the tenants whom it could not legitimately persuade to make war on all landlords without distinction, and to denounce alike the lightest and the heaviest rents. The excuse given by the revolutionary leaders for this curious absence of discrimination was that landlords were in their eyes mere supporters of England, and for this non-economic reason condemned to economic extinction. As a protection to the landlords against this conspiracy, which openly and ostentatiously demanded their destruction, root and branch, there was nothing better than a so-called Coercion Act, based on principles most hostile to liberty, but totally destitute of the faculty of coercion. Some scores or hundreds of alleged ringleaders of crime were to be detained as suspected persons, harboured rather than imprisoned, immune from unpleasant labour and restricted diet, entitled to be regaled with the best nourishment provided by the treasurer of the American fund, free to see and advise all their confederates and allies in the parlours of a friendly abode,—that was all that the excellent Mr. Forster had to offer as a defence against prairie value and Captain Moonlight. Naturally and inevitably the threatened landlords met threats with such opposition as the laws still provided. General proclamations against rent were met by general service of notices to pay rent. ‘Be evicted rather than pay,’ was the order of Messrs. Parnell and Egan. ‘Be evicted if you do not pay,’ was the necessary retort of the landowners, faced with ruin and abandoned by authority. I repeat that Mr. Gladstone was quite right in believing that moderate evils could be met by moderate remedies, and in framing his Land Act on that assumption. Unfortunately an immoderate evil had been added to the moderate one, and the Land Act was helpless against a combination which implied that good landlords were rather

more detestable than bad ones, because their excellence might tend to reconcile their tenantry to British Government. Meantime the wretched owners of landed estate were aware that a powerful section of English opinion, which longed to make short work of landlordism in England also, was minimising all the worst characteristics of the new Jacobinism, even while Mr. Treasurer Egan was paying from £75,000 to £150,000 for the work of the Ladies' Land League and other auxiliaries of more crimson hue.

'Captain Moonlight will take my place when I am arrested,' was a parting instruction of Mr. Parnell to his followers, before retiring to the martyrdom he had deliberately provoked in furtherance of the plans of that cool and cunning brain. 'Mr. Parnell never publicly condemned crime,' was the regretful admission of Earl Spencer. A vast organisation which notoriously remunerated crime was the particular incarnation of Captain Moonlight which took Mr. Parnell's place in 1881 and 1882. I think I may quote the judicious admissions of Mr. Parnell's devoted biographer in this connexion.

The place of the National Land League was at once taken by the Ladies' Land League, an organisation formed some twelve months previously on the suggestion of Mr. Davitt *to meet the very emergency which had arisen*. The ladies very soon outleagued the League. . . . No controlling influence was exercised now.

As the history of Russian Nihilism and the histories of other cases of politico-criminal association have often shown, the ferocity of subversive passions is not abated by female agency. Captain Moonlight in petticoats certainly assumed none of the softer sentiments when he had accomplished his travesty. The feminine mentality, always borne to extremes, again illustrated its tendency. Female lack of scruple becomes most readily absolute unscrupulousness. The mission of the Ladies' Land League was as patent as the O'Connell Monument. Organised to realise the boast of making Ireland ungovernable, they received £3000 a week from Mr. Egan for the execution of their



purpose. 'Since the imprisonment or dispersion of the men who led it,' wrote Earl Cowper to the Cabinet, 'the work has been taken up by women.' As soon as Mr. Parnell's plan had succeeded; as soon as, aided by his allies within the Cabinet, he had seen himself preferred to Mr. Forster, and had been authorised by the head of the British Government to support Liberal principles in Ireland; the first movement of his liberty was to close the bank account of the Ladies' Land League. As he told Michael Davitt, 'he did not want them to keep the ball rolling any longer.' I knew slightly many members of the Ladies' Land League; they were mostly young, many pious, some very pretty; all ladylike and modest women; all mænads or militants when you touched the subject of landlordism and England. None of them, to my knowledge, ever admitted that they encouraged the actual taking of life. None of them, to my knowledge, ever feigned to deplore 'the death of a traitor.' The expression of their wrath at their summary suppression by Parnell, as soon as he had gained his end, was interesting to hear. The negotiation with the Government through Captain O'Shea was known to them long before it was known to the House of Commons. They knew that Parnell admired Mrs. O'Shea nine years before the Divorce Court, and they did not hesitate, with feminine logic or acumen, to connect his readiness to 'capitulate' with his 'longing to see Kitty.' Their absence of veneration dubbed the chief mere 'Kitty.' Even the sublime phalanx of the sub-chiefs, who like Napoleon's marshals — only greater — surrounded with their glory the conqueror of Gladstone, were openly derided by the wrathful maidens as 'cowardly Kitty's cowardly crowd.' Of the effect of their fanaticism and command of money there never was a doubt. We may hope that there was error in the current story that the Ladies' Land League always refused relief to every district which had been unmarked by an outrage within a given time. Their customary reply in such cases was said to run on these lines as entered in the Book of Kells:—

LADIES' LAND LEAGUE, DUBLIN.

SIR,

In reply to the application of your branch for the relief of evicted tenants in the parishes of Ballygow and Ballyroe, I am instructed to inform you that the records of your district having been carefully examined, no trace of manly opposition to tyranny can be detected for the past three months. Under these circumstances we are forced to doubt the reality of the distress which you ask us to alleviate. By order,

MARY GENTLE,  
*Secretary.*

During the imprisonment of Mr. Parnell at least £80,000, probably more, were paid by Mr. Treasurer Egan from Paris to the account of the Ladies' Land League at Dublin. During the same period, we may take Mr. Parnell's biographer as a witness who will not unjustly summarise facts of the horrible situation :—

The ladies very soon outleagued the Land League. . . . Things went from bad to worse. For the ten months preceding coercion the outrages were 2379. For the ten months succeeding coercion the outrages were 3821.

When we classify the outrages the case appears even worse. During the ten months preceding coercion the homicides, attempted homicides, and firings into dwellings were 100. During the ten months succeeding coercion the murders were twenty as against seven in the previous period. The firings at the person and into dwellings were 185.

In the first quarter of 1881, when Parnell had not yet retired openly in favour of Madam Moonlight, there was one murder. In the first quarter of 1882 the murders were six. Homicidal cases generally had jumped from seven to thirty-three. Clearly Mr. Parnell had established his right to be taken into partnership with the British Government! The judicious expenditure of £80,000 collected in America under the eyes and harangues of his special agents, and distributed by Mr. Egan from Paris through local hands by the agency of the Ladies' Land League, had produced the exact results capable of impressing lovers of peace in the Cabinet at Westminster that Mr.

Parnell was precisely the ally and partner to ensure the peace of Ireland. As a matter of fact, Parnell could do nothing of the sort. He could, like many another incendiary, set a fire going ; but he might fail to extinguish it just when he had gained his personal object. I would be careful to add that I am convinced that leading personages in the Liberal Cabinet never knew more than they were allowed by their surroundings to know of the relations between Mr. Parnell and agencies like the Ladies' Land League. Mr. Gladstone, for instance, was probably informed of Mr. Parnell's dismissal of the feminine auxiliaries, but not of his enlisting and commissioning them 'to meet the very emergency which had arisen.' The organisation for destroying landlordism in Ireland would never have made much progress without the sympathy of English alliances for the destruction of landlordism in England ; and, as I have already intimated, it was the left wing, extending from Mr. Chamberlain to Mr. Bradlaugh, who formed the watchful reserve of Mr. Parnell's heterogeneous army.

While outrage was manufacturing wholesale in Ireland, and Madam Moonlight was the Parnellite Joan of Arc, there was oratory in Parliament, and the unimprisoned members of the Parliamentary party fought a bold and skilful fight, some specially against coercion, some specially for reform of the Land Act, all against the luckless Mr. Forster. The war against coercion was one of the most extraordinary which has ever been chronicled. The plea was not that coercion should end because crime had disappeared, but because crime had doubled ! If Moonlight and Co. had disappeared from the face of the island, there ought never more to be constitutional liberty in Ireland. As every form of outrage multiplied, as no man's person was safe from molestation and no man's business was safe from dictation, the prisons ought to be opened without further ceremony. In other countries, in India when infested by Thugs, for example, the criminals were tracked by skilful spies, were segregated from advice and



consultation, were punished by just tribunals without any juries of devout sympathisers with the Indian goddess of destruction. If there were Thugs in Ireland, the method adopted had been to lodge their suspected leaders in Government caravanserais, for a strictly limited period, with excellent board and lodging, with every opportunity for consultations and counsellings, with free access to the initiated outside the hospitable walls. As, under these circumstances, Thuggee had prospered mightily, and more crimes than ever were being reported every morning, it followed that the suspected leaders should be returned to the bosom of the circles which they adorned. As one of the finest products of party government and the parliamentary system, the situation was hard to beat. I may add that a high level of parliamentary debate was frequently attained. A Conservative member, Sir John Hay, indicated the dissatisfaction of the Tory party by a notice of motion which openly condemned the imprisonment without trial of 700 persons, and proposed that where trial by jury had broken down, trial by judges must be substituted. A former leader of the House, Mr. W. H. Smith, repeated in regular form the demand made by Lord Lansdowne on the passing of the Land Act the previous year, that steps should be taken to solve the Irish agrarian problem on the basis of peasant proprietary, the system of dual ownership involved in the Acts of 1870 and 1881 having broken down. This Conservative idea has since been followed up in Ashbourne and Wyndham Acts, with a success which has up to the present continued to preserve from generation to generation this hopeless puzzle of Unionist administration in Ireland. Mr. Gladstone, with the prescience of statesmanship or the pride of authorship, declined to consider solutions so hostile to his own invention ; and perhaps nothing tended so much to smoothen the way towards the withdrawal of Parnell's excommunication by the Premier than the news that the imprisoned enemy was actually turning his attention to the amendment instead of the repudiation of the legislation of 1881. It

was reported to Gladstone by some good friends of 'Captain Moonlight's nominator,' that Parnell had accepted the bulk of the Gladstone Land Act and only demanded some omitted adaptations to particular classes of cases. If the Irish party headed by Mr. Parnell would come forward and openly admit that their condemnation of the Act had been partial and erroneous, what a triumph for the statesman who had thus been proved to understand Ireland better than its own representatives! It was well known that any unusual interest in the Land Act aroused responsive sentiments in Mr. Gladstone, and even the terrible Tim Healy had found a soft spot in Mr. Gladstone's ministerial heart in consequence of his careful study of the Act so as to be said to understand it as well as its eminent originator. It was equally well known to careful observers that, under all his war paint, Mr. Healy simply venerated Mr. Gladstone.

Meantime the catastrophe which I had foreseen from the beginning, which I had endeavoured to prevent by opposing the system of mere obstruction, had burst upon the Parliament. In face of the increased determination of the Parnellites to abuse the forms of the House, and their increased power through their considerable numbers, the Gladstone Government had taken the plunge, and had introduced the closure of debate and a multitude of lesser abrogations of the ancient liberties. It is not worth while recording or discussing the stages or provocations of such a revolution. The revolution was the only thing which mattered. Possibly sooner or later, and sooner rather than later, it would have been necessary to curtail the large licence of a more spacious, because less crowded time. The scriptural warning against new wine in old bottles had been spoken in vain to the British Parliament. The assembly, which had sufficed for all the affairs and discussions of the groups of fine gentlemen who represented about the fortieth part of the present Empire, was strangely crowded with the tithe of the affairs which had since been thrust upon it. It had long been impossible to pay more than the most cursory attention to the overwhelming

majority of the matters destined for parliamentary decision. Under the most moderate attempt to make the judgment of the House a reality, instead of a pretence, the machine could not work. If there was a congested district in the British Isles it was the bills and motions department of the legislature. The mere asking the questions lawfully demanded by the convenience or the rights of four hundred millions of people would have engaged more time than the overstuffed survival of a simpler life could devote to everything together. Still the House of Commons was wedded to its glorious freedom, and probably nothing but *plus-quam-asinine* obstinacy and ignorance could have so quickly precipitated the sacrifice of those unexampled privileges. The Parliament of Grattan had indeed a bitter revenge the day that the Parliament of Pitt, in order to crush a body of representatives who should never have been dragged from College Green, descended to the mechanical levels of a Continental Diet dependent for its little modicum of free speech on the tolerance of a ministerial majority. At least I took the nobler part of endeavouring to make the descent less unworthy of the former altitude. I sought, above all, to preserve the impartiality of the Chair from being the cloak of a Cabinet and the deceit of the Parliament. When the Premier wanted the closure, let him ask for it on his ministerial responsibility! Let him not whisper behind Mr. Speaker a suggestion which Mr. Speaker must pretend to be his own! On May 1, 1882, it was my duty and distinction to move *the resolution which was the last defence of the great tradition of the Chair*; and my proposal that, not the Speaker, but the minister who wanted the gag, should move it, was only rejected by 220 votes against 164. I had trained Parnell for the work which he had rendered unworkable; and I was the chief mourner at the interment of the august victim which I had never intended to destroy. On May 1, 1882, I failed to save the liberty of the British House of Commons. No other member can contest with me the sorrowful achievement; and I had never commanded so large an army.



The best friends of democratic liberty combined in vain with the Tories of three kingdoms to save the Chair at Westminster from being even as the Chairs at Paris and Berlin.

I have never concealed my suspicion that, had there not been a wish for the closure for its own sake in official quarters of the House, the measures for quelling obstruction would have been directed against the alleged culprits instead of against the Constitution which they had misused. It certainly seems in itself midsummer madness that because the member for Dungarvan or the member for Cork or a dozen more—English, Irish, or Scots—abuse the forms of the House, not occasionally, but persistently, therefore it is the forms of the House which must be altered; punished, so to speak. If there were no desire to alter those ancient rules of liberty, why did not Mr. Speaker simply order as many offenders as he considered to be offenders to sit in silence, under pain of being removed for misconduct? That would not have been more unprecedented than putting the question by interrupting the debate. If Mr. Speaker could do the one thing by authority, he could have done the other. But putting the question as an interruption violated the liberty of every member who desired to speak upon the question, violated the freedom of Parliament. There was precedent for Mr. Speaker ‘taking notice’ of offending individuals. *There was no precedent for diminishing the rights of the House which, besides, were fundamental rights of the Empire.* If it had been necessary to expel with perpetual disqualification ten, twenty, wilful defaulters, it could have been done. *The whole difficulty was individual. One individual had begun it. A handful of individuals had exaggerated it beyond endurance.* The wisdom of Parliament condoned the misdeeds of the individuals but abolished the great inheritance! Was it primarily to check the subtle, ubiquitous, orderly, recurring, varying, never-exceeding, never-obstructing, irritant [opposition of the Fourth party, that the changes were made which muzzle English liberty as

well as Irish disaffection? I heard much at the time, in half-confidences, in open hopes and wishes, which often made me think it was not Ireland alone that was to be silenced. One of my ablest and most valued comrades of the Butt leadership, Richard Power of Waterford, was of my opinion from his own experience and his own investigations. He told me that Captain Gosset, the old Serjeant-at-Arms, held the same view. 'It is not merely to gag the Irish, it is to expedite other Government measures in face of an English opposition, that your pretext is utilised.' Sir Henry Drummond Wolff of the Fourth party said to me at once: 'You see our British logic, Mr. O'Donnell. Instead of hanging you, the House is asked to strangle itself.' Mr. Joseph Cowen was of the same opinion. Conversing with many Radical supporters of the closure, I got repeated assurances that, though the Irish had forced the matter to the front, it was useful above all to make a clearance of antediluvian formulas which might hinder real reforms.

While the ministerial speakers were glibly quoting a silly Return on 'Rules of Procedure in Foreign Parliaments,' I, whose special profession was the study of foreign politics and governments, wondered with all my soul at the abysmal innocence of those British statesmen, who did not know that there was only one Parliament in the entire world, and that was the House at Westminster. If the Irish House had not been closed, there would be two Parliaments, but no more. The other things were 'Legislatures,' machines for turning 'Bills' into 'Laws.'

That and nothing more.

The House at Westminster, as it had come down to us, did not believe in legislation except to the most moderate extent; but it did believe in representation and discussion. The House at Westminster was based on the fundamental truth that legislation should be as rare and deliberate as possible, but that administration was the essence of government; and there could be good administration or

tolerable administration only under the supervision and scrutiny of free debate and interrogation. It was free debate and interrogation which made representation possible. Make law-making the supreme business, and you *must* have delegates, that is to say items, instead of representatives; for a representative is essentially a general trustee and guardian, while a delegate is only a joint in the tail of a majority or minority. So long as Parliament was Parliament, it was the grand inquest of the Empire. It soared above comparison. It had a life and dignity apart. It might not pass two petty laws in a twelvemonth. That was no matter. Free nations can do without new laws for generations. Free nations cannot do without free speech, free opinion, free praise or blame. When the expression of a representative's opinion and judgment must depend on the permission of a ministerial majority, you can have a 'Corps Législatif,' an 'Abgeordnetenhaus,' a 'Chamber of Deputies.' *Your Parliament has disappeared.* There is nothing but some technicalities and trimmings to distinguish its poor substitute from a Trades Union Congress or Suffragettes' Convention. When the object of what-was-a-Parliament becomes the making of laws by a regular mechanism, the real making of laws passes to the delegator-multitude outside, and the delegator-multitude will take no interest in laws which are merely humdrum or just or moderate. It must have material or passionate inducements for delegating A. rather than B. The degraded law-making machine which used to be a Sovereign Parliament now comes as a mere final stage or registration chamber. You have legislation by crowds instead of representation in Parliament. And crowds, the best of them, have never yet been moved to legislate, except for one or both of these two motives: passion and profit. While the House pretended to chase Irish revolutionism from its procedure, it was making revolutionism the permanent motor and directive of the British Constitution. Debates were dead, that is, free debates. The majority was everything; and the majority was made,



like a Land League election, by tutored multitudes blindly keen for passion and profit. The estate owners of Ireland were in the melting-pot to-day; the estate owners of England to-morrow. Prairie value to-day! Unearned increment to-morrow! The Irish Parliament was at least suppressed by foreign force. The British Parliament petered out in domestic surrender. Representative government is one thing. Government by direct mandate is not representative government. It is direct dictation.

I considered that the pending transformation in the character of the House was clearly reflected in the ministerial attitude of its presiding authorities. I shall not renew the reference to Mr. Speaker Brand's interruption of the coercion debate and summary putting the motion. What should not be forgotten was, that Mr. Speaker Brand, immediately after this stroke of force, was offered, and accepted, a Grand Cross of the Bath. On what battlefield had he gained those spurs? Was this a ministerial reward? When subsequently Dr. Lyon Playfair, as chairman of committee, repeated and exaggerated the intervention of Sir Henry Brand, K.G.C.B., there was an exhibition of caustic sarcasm by Mr. Healy, which hit the decorated Speaker straight and fair. Mr. Healy wanted to know from Mr. Gladstone, 'if her Majesty's Government intended to confer on Dr. Playfair the Grand Cross of the Bath?' Sir Henry Brand was in the chair. Again, the Speaker had allowed Mr. Gladstone to move 'that Mr. O'Donnell be no longer heard.' When, on another occasion, I moved precisely the same motion, in precisely similar circumstances, Mr. Speaker demanded and obtained my suspension! Yet the rights of members are equal. On one occasion I was suspended, and no explanation accepted. A few days later I found such a body of support that the resolution of suspension was removed from the journals of the House. On another occasion, while the Irish party were opposing at excessive length a Crimes Bill, although I had spoken little, had been absent altogether from the House for twelve hours, nor had uttered a word since my

return, I was named for suspension by the chairman of committee as 'combining to obstruct public business!' I called my suspension by the House led by the Government 'an infamous proceeding.' It was. No English member could be treated with such insolence and injustice. I explained that I was censuring not the poor chairman, but the action of the Government and its majority. The facts were quite notorious. Mr. Labouchere pointed out that 'the chairman had named Mr. O'Donnell for obstructing the business of Parliament, though he had been absent during the greater part of the sitting and had never been even warned by the Chair.' Mr. Cowen, one of the most independent of men, supported the protest. As a matter of fact, which was quite notorious, I had tried to dissuade the Parnellites from their monotonous obstruction. On the motion of Mr. Gladstone I was excluded from the House for fourteen days! I remembered that shameless outrage on an Irish representative, and, I think, I have obtained ample satisfaction, though not from British courtesy. I think that it is the discourtesies which are heaped on Irish Nationalists which have almost as much as anything else to do with much Nationalist resentment.<sup>1</sup> Even when I was struggling to save the British soldier from the cat-o'-nine-tails, the universal assumption of London was that it was mere obstruction. There was one British statesman of the highest rank, opposed to me, I regretted deeply, on all the gravest Irish questions, and he, and he alone, publicly gave me recognition for my work such as would be paid ungrudgingly to any Englishman. This statesman was Lord Hartington, who warmly thanked me for my successful agitation against flogging

<sup>1</sup> It may be cordially admitted that the politeness of the British supermen towards the inferior creatures from a subjugated island had infinitely improved since that early Victorian era when a Conservative member for Canterbury criticised the policy of the Whig Premier in these terms: 'Nothing is too low or too foul for his purpose. The stews of the Tower Hamlets and the bogs of Ireland are ransacked for recruits; but his sheet anchor is the body of Irish papists and rapparees whom the priests return to the House of Commons.' Yet poor Daniel O'Connell was the most loyal of subjects, who never mentioned his Queen's name without lifting his hat.

and underfeeding in the Indian jails. I do not know whether I shall have occasion to return to the consideration of a distinguished man whom his coronet and its prospect seemed to condemn to secondary importance ; but this I say, the Marquis of Hartington appeared to me to be the only British statesman who, if he had dealt with the subject, could have reconciled Nationalism and Imperialism in Ireland. His subsequent objections to Mr. Gladstone's scheme of Home Rule were all unanswerable ; and I, a thorough maintainer of Irish legislative independence, acknowledge that they were so. Except perhaps on financial subjects, there was more relevant matter and more broad thought in one of Lord Hartington's speeches than in a round dozen of the greatest parliamentarian's utterances. Unfortunately Mr. Gladstone had made Ireland his specialty, from which intruders were warned off ; and Mr. Gladstone, great parliamentarian, great speaker, great magician with phrases, and great manipulator of principles, was congenitally incapable of constructing anything on Irish soil that was not a ruin or a Chinese puzzle.

Ever since the Gladstone Government had issued its declaration of war in the Coercion Act, the relations between the Third and Fourth parties had been increasingly cordial. Cordial might be too warm an adjective to apply to Mr. Arthur Balfour, who never failed to maintain a semi-alooftness suitable to the heir-presumptive of the Conservative leadership, which since the death of Lord Beaconsfield had descended to Lord Salisbury. As far as hostility to the ministry went, the three other members of the world-shaking group were, well, as much members of the Third party as we were of the Fourth. The Liberal whips seldom were able to discern any other distinction between the anti-ministerialism of the Thirds and the Fourths, beyond the larger range and finer touch of the duo or triplet which followed Lord Randolph Churchill. The patriots whom the Land League had sent to Westminster could rarely wander far from their potato ridges of their own motion, but were usually keen to back the forays of Athos, Porthos,



Aramis, and D'Artagnan. Of course, if Lord Randolph was the deadly D'Artagnan, Mr. Arthur Balfour was the exquisite Aramis with his elegant culture, though less fatal sword. I remember the considerate grace with which Mr. Balfour, on one occasion of many, commiserated Mr. Gladstone on the ill-fortune that, by common report, the administration of his government in Ireland appeared to be almost as unpopular as it was inefficient. I am not sure if that quiet observation, 'almost as unpopular as inefficient,' at a moment when poor Mr. Forster's lack of favour was patent, did not do the Chief Secretary as much harm in the opinion of the Liberal party as many volumes of denunciation. In the nervous, supersensitive condition to which the great Liberal party was being reduced, the criticisms of their mocking or supercilious opponents were accepted with almost as much belief as exasperation. The Irish policy was the shirt of Nessus on the vast shoulders and mighty arms of the giant, impeding and inflaming every movement. Gladstone was the Grand Old Man, the unparalleled parliamentarian, the master of eloquence, expository and scathing. The Liberals would follow him anywhere, and yet they allowed him to be the target of all the slings and arrows of very outrageous Randolph Churchill. I often found myself murmuring the verse, 'As bandogs bait the stately bull.' There is a page in the 'Memories of Eight Parliaments' by Sir Henry Lucy which admirably illustrates some of the minor methods by which the Fourth party mocked the courtesy and lowered the prestige of the lion of debate.

Lord Randolph would lead off, drawing that child of nature, Gladstone, into lengthy reply. When the Premier resumed his seat, Drummond Wolff rose, and with profuse declaration of deference asked for information on another point. Up got the Premier, brimming with energy and another speech. In this the subtle mind of John Gorst discovered a flaw, which he did not doubt arose from misapprehension of what his honourable friend the member for Christchurch had said. On this he laboured a quarter of an hour or more, Gladstone

intently listening, while his colleagues on the Treasury Bench, conscious of the snare, tossed about in despair. The temptation to instruct three guileless young men, evidently searchers after truth, certainly most deferential in their recognition of age and experience, was too much for the Premier, who eagerly sprang to his feet with a third speech. Thus did Lord Randolph's strategy, excelling the poet's bedstead, contrive a treble debt to pay. It wasted the time of the House; it undermined the authority of the Premier; and it kept the Fourth party well to the front.

The implied censure on Mr. Gladstone's inability to perceive the Quartopartist joke—after all the Sage of Hawarden was a Scotsman—is just enough. But, in the first place, it must be remembered that, if Mr. Gladstone was wont to defend himself and explain himself too readily, on the other hand he was practically destitute of defenders against his tormenting assailants. If Lord Randolph at that period had got into collision with the Irishmen, he would have been swept, riddled, and overborne by a swarm of assailants, some not inferior individually to himself, either in ingenuity or venom. If Messrs. Sexton, T. P. O'Connor, and T. M. Healy had settled themselves to occupy the attention of the member for Woodstock, it was not Sir H. Drummond Wolff or Mr. Gorst who could have alleviated the damages. The truth was that the Liberal party was half-beaten from the day that it backed—most conscientiously—Mr. Bradlaugh's sorrows in the division lobbies, and became wholly demoralised with the collapse of Mr. Forster's irritating and egregious coercion. The *Œil de Bœuf* at Versailles was not thronged with more zealous servitors of the grand monarque than was the exercise-yard of Kilmainham with devotees of the uncrowned king; and the decisions of the councils of war in Mr. Parnell's cell-parlour were distributed throughout Ireland with at least the facility of the *Lettres du Roi*. Kilmainham was not a prison but a headquarters. That was coercion! When even the Irish viceroy, Lord Cowper, sadly admitted that he dared not interfere with the zealous young ladies, who

were distributing Mr. Egan's £80,000 among the requisite patriots of Ribbon Fenianism, for fear of censure in the House of Commons, it is needless to accumulate further illustrations of the moral disaster of the British administration of Ireland. Lord Cowper declares that he himself considered the women should be treated 'exactly like the men,' just as a magistrate would base no sentence for stealing boots or shoes on the sex of the offender; 'but the feeling of the House of Commons must be consulted'; and Mr. Gladstone's Irish viceroy sadly added that it was probable that 'the arrest of the women would raise such a storm' as to frighten her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant and General-Governor in Ireland out of the idea of interfering with Madam Moonlight. The Tricoteuses of the Guillotine were not more sacred in the eyes of Citizens Marat and Robespierre than were the heroines of Messrs. Egan and Ford in the eyes of the Dublin Privy Council. It is to be remembered that when Mr. Parnell's plans had brought the Government to capitulation, and when, as he told Mr. Davitt, 'he did not want the Ladies' Land League any longer to keep the ball rolling,' he stopped them without ceremony or thanks. While he 'wanted them to keep the ball rolling,' he let them have the £80,000; but when the magnificent record of outrage and crime had completely broken down the dignity of her Majesty's ministers, and they had accepted the terms and the collaboration of the voluntary prisoner of Kilmainham, the stopper was put on the source of the £80,000. Not another penny! Mr. Davitt often related to me how furious Parnell was at the refusal of the ladies to recognise Parnell's treaty with the Government as any reason for interrupting the irregular war against landlordism. 'I have agreed that there must be quiet in the country, and I am the judge.'—'But we should never have done this work, Mr. Parnell, if we did not believe that you would never, never, make terms with an English Government.' 'You have had plenty of money to cover all your trouble and expense. You shall have no more.'—'But we are in debt. We have promised to pay people all over



Ireland.' 'You will get no more money from me.' Mr. Davitt told Mr. Barry O'Brien<sup>1</sup> that it was with extreme difficulty that he got Parnell to send a final cheque of £500 to the Ladies' Land League, merely to pay their debts. 'They have squandered the money given to them, and *I shall take care that they get no more.*' Davitt had to push his protest against this shabby treatment of 'the rollers of the ball' to the point of a personal quarrel with Parnell—refusing to see Parnell until at least the pressing debts of the ladies were paid—before at last a final cheque of £500 was sent to the Ladies' Land League. 'There,' snapped Parnell, 'let those ladies make the most of it. *They will get no more money from me.*' £80,000 for outrage while it was expedient that Captain Moonlight should 'take my place.' Not a shilling after Captain Moonlight's crimes had brought Mr. Gladstone to his knees. And poor Lord Cowper did not dare even to arrest the *vierges de sang* for fear 'a storm in the House of Commons' might follow such improper interference with the flourishing liberty of crime which existed in Ireland under coercion! We are refused our Irish Parliament of King, Lords, and Commons; the very citadel and fortress of all that was conservative in education, property, and religion. We were granted 'rollers of the ball' who spend £80,000 on outrage and intimidation, so long as it suited the ally of English statesmen to keep Captain Moonlight in the saddle and behind the hedge.

Even the £80,000 might have been ineffectual for Mr. Parnell's plans, if he had not possessed in the House of Commons the devoted collaboration of an English left wing which paralysed detection, repression, and punishment. When Mr. Parnell was examined before the specially hoodwinked Commission in 1888, he informed the presiding judges that the outrages under the stimulus of the £80,000 during his Kilmainham retirement were 'entirely due' to the discontent of the small tenants at their treatment under the Land Act! 'I had every reason to believe that

the state of the country, and the crime in the country, was entirely due to the inability of these small and poor tenants to pay their rents, and that in self-protection they were going about, or their sons were going about, banding themselves together to intimidate the larger tenants from paying.'<sup>1</sup> There have been fewer finer pieces of unscrupulous management in the world's history than the organised trickery before, during, and after the Parnell Commission. I have often thought how easy it is for an Irishman of moderate ability, with a little cunning and discretion, and with a considerable control of Irish votes, to obtain almost anything from the competition and ignorance of English parties in Parliament. Even when one of them feels itself compromised, and might desire to draw back, the necessity of covering its tracks disposes it to complicities which may range from blackmail to capitulation. I never saw, and never yet heard of, anything Irish succeeding on its merits at Westminster. But this is no British peculiarity of party government.

During the parliamentary period between the admission of Mr. Parnell to his haven of rest at Kilmainham and his triumphal exit from that busy retreat, there was practically nothing connected with the Irish party which deserves to be recorded at length. On numerous motions, resolutions, proposals and protests, Messrs. McCarthy, T. P. O'Connor, and Healy—when not inspiring the resources of the American Land League—Dillon, O'Brien, Sexton, A. O'Connor, and E. Leamy displayed eloquence, resourcefulness, and ability which often overpowered their British opponents. The Irish critics of the Land League and its works on the Conservative side were often markedly successful both in point of practical objections and eloquent condemnation. They received but moderate attention from the English Conservative side, accustomed to surrender Irish Conservative interests for the sake of greater peace in Britain. They were entirely ignored by the Liberal party, with whom the single phrase 'Irish Orangeman' is always sufficient

<sup>1</sup> *Special Commission*, Q. 58,758.

to discount Conservative arguments from Ireland. For myself personally, I was very active in many matters—Indian, Colonial, and Egyptian—in which I endeavoured, sometimes with success, to aid what I believed to be the cause of justice. But for the destruction of the Home Rule movement by the Land League, these efforts of mine would have been directly connected with my sub-policy of making Ireland a power throughout the general Empire. In this connexion I once received a singular and historical presentation, if I may say so. There came to me on the part of his Honour the President of the Transvaal Republic, again possessed of its independence, an ebony and silver casket containing one hundred pounds sterling minted in the name of Paul Kruger after his election to the presidency, and accompanied by the words, ‘In memory of kindness, 1877–1881.’ It was no fee, no reward, I was told by the delegation. ‘The President thought that the Irish member who had spoken such consoling words in great affliction, and who had encouraged broken-hearted patriots with great hopes, might like to see one of the realisations of the dream which he had helped them to dream until it was fulfilled.’<sup>1</sup> I asked my South African friends, if ten pounds would not do as well as one hundred, but was told that a present was sacred between friends. It was in his bitter woe and ruin that I saw President Kruger again in the shouting streets of Paris years and years afterwards. I took my hundred pounds of Transvaal coinage, and I changed them, all but ten,

<sup>1</sup> By the way, there has been shown to me an astounding exception to the rule observed in the immortal works composed under the Parnell censorship, in which I was occasionally mentioned as ‘following Parnell on the South Africa Bill’—I believe that Parnell hardly knew that South Africa was outside of Europe. It is true that the interesting book on *Recollections of Troubled Times in Irish Politics* written by Mr. T. D. Sullivan, ex-M.P., ex-Lord Mayor of Dublin, cannot be said to have suffered the Parnell censorship, as it has lately appeared. At p. 183 of his book, Mr. Sullivan, speaking of the session 1877, writes :—

‘The Irish members, led by Mr. Frank Hugh O’Donnell, resisted in prolonged debates, and with much walking through the lobbies, the Government proposal for the annexation of the Transvaal and the formation of the South African Colonies into a Confederation under the British Crown. The Irishmen vigorously opposed the scheme—which was wrecked by the rifles of the Boers at Majuba Hill.’



into current money such as settles the bills of London tailors.

The most serious considerations which should have come before Parliament as raised by the Land Act of 1881 were these :—

First, as raised by the agricultural condition of Ireland. Was it legislation or cultivation which was really wanting to the country? I had devoted increasing attention to this inquiry. I was certain of this fact, that the methods of farming in Ireland were the most primitive in Europe, so far as I had seen. Crops, manuring, attention to food crops for home consumption, attention to food crops for English consumption, actual amount of work, use of adequate implements; in all these matters the clients of the Land League were waiters on Providence.<sup>1</sup> Of course, the landlords of a country are the natural leaders of agricultural advance; but the Irish landlords had been put out of the running, and had only squalled over their misfortunes.

<sup>1</sup> On this subject of the voluntary self-impoverishment of Ireland by undercultivation, there is singularly instructive information in the examination of the Right Hon. Mr. Finucane before the Dudley Commission. Mr. Commissioner Finucane is one of the amiable fanatics of the Legislative Panacea :—

‘I will just read to you a passage, if I may, which illustrates this very thing, from a book by M. Emile de Laveleye, a Frenchman, who is a great authority on the subject.

‘I am not in the least disputing what is done on the Continent.

‘It is not with regard to the Continent, but Ireland. He says: “On the whole, for carrying farming to a high pitch of perfection, *Ireland enjoys far greater advantages than Flanders*, the land being much superior, the climate equally favourable to the growth of valuable crops, and the same markets being at hand.” That is one passage. Then he says: “True, it may be said, he must have money for that, and the Irishman has none. But where does the Fleming’s money come from? From his flax, colza, hops, and chicory, crops which he sells at the rate of from 600 to 1500 francs (124 to 460) per hectare; and why cannot the Irishman go and do likewise? The Irishman, it may be answered, must grow food for himself. But so does the Fleming; for in fact, apart from the special crops referred to, *he grows enough to support a population relatively twice as large as that of Ireland*. It has, indeed, been argued that the special crops, for which Flanders is famous, would be out of the question save for access to markets which are not within the reach of the Irishman. But this argument seems to me to have small validity. The chief market for the agricultural produce for Belgium is England, and *is London nearer to Ostend and Antwerp than Dublin and Cork are to Liverpool and Manchester?* Friesland and Holland send coal and butter to England, and Galicia ships oxen by way of Vigo, across the dangerous Bay of Biscay; but why cannot Ireland do the same?”’

England had crushed their native Parliament in which they were supreme. England had disfranchised their tenant voters by the hundred thousand, and had derided them for their loss of influence. *England had free-traded them to beggary.* England had sold them up themselves by the thousand when they were in their worst difficulties after the Black Famine. England was now in hot negotiation or fond expectation of negotiation with the Jacobin leaders, who wanted to destroy the last of them 'because they were the English garrison!' A land without tillage and without gentry, that was the British ideal, it appeared, for Unionised Ireland. Practically speaking, and quite naturally, the House of Commons at Westminster believed in the cultivation of Bills alone. In this way the fundamental fact of the Irish crisis remained ignored and interred, in the fond hope of no resurrection.

In the second place, whatever the cause or the condition of the uncultivation existing in Ireland at the introduction of the Land Act of 1881, that condition of undercultivation must have been extended and accelerated by the rent-revising clauses of the Act, operating in the actual circumstances of the Irish population, and the actual character of the agitation which pervaded that population. When there was offered to the entire body of farmers the promise and guarantee of an Act of Parliament to lower their rents indefinitely, at recurring periods, on proof of unfitness to pay rent, what *must* be the general effect? Even if there were no powerful organisation of paid agitators proclaiming an agrarian war without mercy, such an offer must operate as a premium on bad tillage, neglect of manuring, neglect of weeding and draining, diminution of labour. 'Show the Land Court that your land is not worth the rent. That is all you have to do in order to get the rent lowered.' That, indeed, was Gladstone's Land Act of 1881 in a nutshell. Nothing to encourage cultivation. Nothing to promote betterment. Nothing even to promote better agricultural education to enable the people to know what was good for the land, although it was notorious to all men of experience

that Irish agriculturists were among the very worst in Europe.

The third point with respect to the Land Act which ought to have obtained the most serious attention of Government and Parliament was concerned with the condition of the agricultural labourers. That condition was very bad before the Act. After the Land Act it became worse. 'Show the Land Court that your land is not worth the rent.' *That maxim was the doom of scores of thousands of agricultural labourers.* Fewer hands were wanted when inferior results were strategically desirable. Within ten years from the passing of the Land Act of 1881 the population of Ireland, in spite of the natural increase by births, had diminished by half a million. Scores of thousands passed every year beyond the Atlantic. The quays of New York and the slums of New York were crowded by stalwart spademen and ploughmen, for whom the Irish farmers had no use, though the soil of Ireland was already shamefully and shockingly uncultivated and neglected. The Irish rulers of Tammany did their charitable best, their corrupt best if you will, to find employment for the big, homeless men in the rate-paid ranks of the New York Corporation's employees. The lost Irishmen soon forgot agricultural skill and training as sweepers and road-menders under generous Tammany; and as soon as they became possessed of a few dollars saved, they hastened to send a contribution to help the agitation which was discouraging the work of the field and the farm; but nobody in Irish America ever sent a penny to establish one school of farming from one end of the island to the other. To lower rents by undercultivating land was the simple summary of patriotic agrarianism.

A fourth point concerning the Land Act should have raised the question of the competency of the Land Courts. Were the sub-commissioners appointed on grounds of skill, experience, and impartiality alone? Did they render their decisions with honesty and without regard to political or social pressure of any kind? The direct contrary was the



case in too many instances to permit of the slightest confidence in the competence of the Land Act tribunals for judging either the merits of the soil or the questions in dispute as between the owner and the tenant. I have already mentioned the example given by Mr. Gladstone's attorney-general in Ireland when, in order to gain the votes of the Derry farmers, he placarded the constituency with the suggestive appeal: *Vote for Porter and Fair Rents*. At the same time, the appointment of a warm partisan of tenant claims as land sub-commissioner was announced in a neighbouring county! Of course, the Derry election ought to have been quashed for such practices, as it is impossible to conceive a more improper practice than for the member of a Government, which was to arrange the constitution of the Land Courts, to appeal to the farmer electors to vote for him if they wanted their rents reduced. ‘How do you try your land cases?’ a member of these curious tribunals was asked; and his reply is asserted to have been: ‘Oh, I go out and smell the land after breakfast, and then I sneeze my decision after lunch.’ I never met anybody who doubted that ‘the tranquillisation of the local population’ was inculcated by authority on the commissioners as the fundamental guide of their action. The Parnellites openly boasted that local ‘pressure’ was the sure way to get favourable decisions on rent for the tenantry. In Mr. Barry O’Brien’s ‘Life of Parnell,’ which is at any rate an exposition of Parnellite views, it is expressly stated that Parnell ‘had little faith in the Land Court. He believed that the *reduction of rents would be in exact proportion to the pressure which the League could bring to bear upon the commissioners.*’ If land commissioners made large reductions, the commissioners were locally popular, and were applauded in the agrarianist press. Then they earned their salaries with ease and dignity. If they happened, unfortunately, to hold that the landlord was a good landlord, and that the existing rent should be no hindrance to a good livelihood by a fairly industrious tenant, then the popularity of the court fell upon evil days. It had not pacified local

opinion, and its action tended directly to indispose the constituencies against the Government itself! This state of mind of the men who were appointed to deal with the estates of the Irish owners of land was commonly known as 'following the rule of funk.' When the Commission was in a state of sufficient funk, it granted reductions of rent of the most satisfactory character, satisfactory to the amateurs of land for next to nothing.<sup>1</sup> It should be added that the official organ of the leaders of the Land League, *United Ireland*, made the intimidation of the Land Courts a fundamental tenet of its policy from the very outset. In its number of September 17, 1881, for instance—long before the provocation of Parnell's arrest by Mr. Forster, and in a calm and judicial spirit, so to speak—the League organ announced that terrorism must be applied to the Land Courts as well as to the landlords. 'The spirit which cowed the tyrants in their rent offices must be the spirit in which the Land Commission Courts are to be approached.' In the registered list of proprietors of *United Ireland*, it must be remembered that the two chiefs of the agrarian revolution—the ostensible chief, Parnell, and the practical chief, Patrick Egan—figured as holders of the substantial entirety of the property, being shareholders for 237 shares each, of 474 shares together; leaving only 26 shares out of the total capital of 500 shares to be divided among Mr. Justin McCarthy, M.P., Mr. Biggar, M.P., Mr. Richard Lalor, M.P., Mr. William O'Brien, and Dr. Kenny. Mr. W. O'Brien was in addition editor at £400 a year, specially appointed by Mr. Parnell and Patrick Egan. Mr. Parnell, indeed, according to a letter of July 9, 1881, states that he had 'communicated the names to Mr. Egan' of the persons—Justin McCarthy, Biggar, &c.—whom he wished to act as shareholders. Of course, the shares allotted to all these obliging persons, including Parnell himself, were mere Land League money, and it was only natural to

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Barry O'Brien, in his *Life of Parnell*, i. 302, bears this testimony, apparently a personal experience, of the state of mind and morals among the Land Court judges. "'By what rule,'" I once asked an Irish official, "do the Land Courts fix rents?" "By the rule of funk," was the answer.

communicate the names of such shareholders to Mr. Egan, as Egan, being the treasurer of the American money, had to find the pecuniary qualification for all the dummies of the League. In this letter of July 9, Parnell seemed to adopt the estimate that 'a total capital of £10,000, including the purchase-money, will be sufficient' to start the pirate craft, *United Ireland*, on its destroying mission against the peace of Ireland and the liberty and property of Irishmen who were not in receipt of the benefactions of Messrs. Pat Ford and Pat Egan. The conclusion is evident. The deliberate policy of 'cowing' the Land Courts as the estate owners were being cowed, was thus adopted from the very beginning of the operation of the Land Act of 1881 under the very highest authority, as Mr. Parnell put it in the letter of July 9, 'of representatives of the different shades of feeling in the organisation.' The concurrence of these 'shades of feeling' hardly increased the sense of justice or security inspired by the findings of the Land Commission Courts. Mr. Barry O'Brien, in his 'Life of Parnell,' i. 303, expressly takes credit for his hero 'having taken pains to control the decisions of the commissioners.' The Irish gentry were, indeed, to have unstinted opportunities of experiencing what they had gained in person, property, and reputation by coming under the jurisdiction of the Parliament founded by the Act of Union.

A fifth point in connexion with the operation of the Land Act formed a crowning illustration of the total indifference to the most elementary justice which characterised the Act's treatment of the landowners, and which forced them, without exception, into an attitude of hostility to it and to all that it symbolised. I mean the treatment of the encumbrances on estates in their bearing on the incomes of the actual lifeholder of an estate. It was notorious that very many landowners in Ireland were heavily encumbered. Besides jointures and family settlements of all kinds, there was inherited debt, usually contracted at heavy rates of interest. Absenteeism had been an expensive habit—not only to the Ireland deprived of the wealthy



classes tempted to London by the transference to London of the seat of legislation and government for Ireland. *Absenteeism was also expensive, often ruinously expensive, for the absentees themselves.* When the government of Ireland was in Ireland, life in the family mansions round Merrion Square and Rutland Square and Stephen's Green could be sufficiently splendid and ostentatious for Irish traditions, upon an expenditure which became puny and miserly when measured against the train and style of the English aristocracy in the English capital. Irish pride combined with social ambitions of a new and more costly order to stimulate the transplanted gentry of Ireland not to be too much behind the state and luxury of the English society, to which they had been forced to come by the effect of the Union. The London moneylenders were wonderfully accommodating to the Irish borrowers, on good security and large interest. The estates of the Martins of Cro'Martin were not an isolated prey of law life insurance corporations ; nor was ' the Princess of Connamara ' the only heiress of broad Irish acres who had to eat the bread of foreclosure and exile. The estate owners who managed to survive the Black Famine and the treacherous pounce of the Encumbered Estates Acts of 1849 and 1850, were generally in possession of nominal rentals which differed enormously or seriously from the net incomes actually received by the owners after payment of all charges. When Mr. Gladstone let loose his commissioners upon the land, to be ' cowed ' into reducing rents to the popular levels, the Liberal Premier had carefully provided that all reductions should affect *the actual landowner alone*. Estate charges and encumbrances must not be touched by the reductions. The moneylenders of London were sacred. The whole of the shortening of income took place at the expense of the landlord. The example of Colonel King Harman, M.P., formerly hon. secretary of the Home Rule Conference of 1873, was typical of innumerable cases. The King Harman estates produced £40,000 a year ; but £32,000 a year were swallowed up in charges and encumbrances.

Still £8000 formed a noble income in Ireland, and the popular colonel was quite a magnate in the Home Rule party. Mr. Gladstone's commissioners reduced the King Harman rents on an average by 20 per cent., which just amounted to £8000 ! The encumbrances were sacrosanct ; the moneylenders who had lent to Colonel King Harman's ancestors were sacred and immune. Colonel King Harman, the magnate of Home Rule conferences, was made an absolute pauper. Of course, when Mr. Gladstone undertook to visit, without notice, the uneconomic expenditure of dead and gone King Harmans upon their living representative, and upon the living representatives of hundreds and thousands of others who were more or less in the King Harman predicament, the least thing that the British State was bound in common honesty to do was to help the surprised owners over the crisis by British credit. A State loan at three per cent. could have paid off without risk, and with immense benefit to Irish land, the whole mass of the five, six, and ten per cent. loans which were crushing the life out of Irish landowning. The reduction of interest would have also made, automatically, the exaction of rents less keen. In all directions the operation would have combined security for the State lender and benefit to the landlord borrower of vastly cheaper accommodation. The deliberate interference with contracts guaranteed by the whole past of English Government made, as I have said, such help absolutely just, when the English Government itself had broken all the contracts. Nothing of the kind was done. If Captain Moonlight ever reflected on the ethical aspects of his occupation, he may have felt that he was keeping the ordinary obligations of *Meum* and *Tuum*, at least as well as the Union Parliament, towards the betrayed gentlemen who were alleged to be the Union garrison in Ireland. The wholesale robbery of the funds of the Irish Protestant Church in 1869 was now followed by the wholesale robbery of the incomes of the principal members and congregations of that despoiled communion. Of course, neither the parliamentary nor the financial chiefs of the League, neither

Mr. Parnell nor Mr. Egan, felt any call to stimulate the conscience of Westminster Cabinets on behalf of common honesty towards persons who did not possess one-fourth of the voting strength of Messrs. Parnell, Egan, and Company.

A sixth point of lesser importance numerically, but minatory of grave lowering of civilisation in the future, arose in connexion with the diminution of employment and the depression of the class of employment which followed, and continues to follow to-day, the diminished incomes and increasing exodus of the employing classes belonging to landed estate. While the rejoicing farmers, expectant of further kindnesses from the Land Courts, were dismissing their farm hands, as obstacles to the increased deterioration of soil which was needed to invite further reductions of rent, the crippled incomes of the fallen gentry, and all the classes connected with an agricultural gentry, necessitated also a diminution of demand not only for domestic service, but every kind of superior artisanship and retail trade of the finer kinds. The Dublin hatters found no increased call to supply their best silk hats to the rank and file of Land League conventions. The Dublin carriage builders discovered in the orders for ass-carts and jaunting-cars no compensating equivalent for the cessation in phaetons and broughams. The shrinkage in the market for butlers and lady's maids, grooms and coachmen, was instant and obvious. It was no wonder that ten years after Mr. Gladstone's Land Act the population had shrunk by another half-million of people. I visited Galway at this period, and walked on the Salthill road at the hour and the day in the summer season when usually the carriages and horses of the county families, visiting for the annual trip to the sea, used to make gay the thoroughfares and fill the tills of the shopkeepers. Not one was in sight. The pinch of poverty was on the town. I talked to the leading watchmaker. 'My sons will not follow me in the business. Perhaps in America they may find a living. I cannot sell as many silver watches as I used to sell gold.' I asked what trade



had prospered by the Land Act? 'The divil a one but the lawyers in the Land Courts. Bad luck to them!'

But the grimmest point of all was, that, notwithstanding the diminution of rents, there were causes of misery which mocked the most sweeping percentages of the Land Courts to compensate. What was the use of lowering the rent by 25 per cent., when the competition of agricultural produce from all the tariff-protected countries of earth diminished the value of every Irish crop by 30 per cent. and by 40 per cent.? Without the trouble of issuing an ejectment decree, the smart agriculturists from Maine to Argentina raked into their own pockets all the profits of the Irish farmers, in spite of the conjoint blessing of a Land League and a Land Act. 'The fall in the value of crops' became the stereotyped argument in the mouth of Parnell and the other spokesmen of the Irish farmers on the occasion of every amendment of the Land Act which was introduced by the Irish representatives every year after 1881. When it was 'no crops,' the situation was comparatively simple; but when the farmers had crops, but found them worth less and less owing to the North American grain and the South American grain, despair was close. To halve the price of a farmer's produce may be worse than doubling his rent. But free foreign trade was a British fetish. The Cobden Club banquets and the annual Budgets continued to encourage the enterprise of the fine foreign agriculturists on the river of La Plata and the river of Ohio. British statesmanship had a solitary and satisfactory solution for all the problems of foreign competition and home depression. It was the solution of the Land League: 'The fault is the landlord. Down with the rent!' Thirty years after Mr. Gladstone's Land Act, and when the foreign nations had finished their epoch of cheap export of foodstuffs and were beginning to consume for themselves, at a higher cost too, the harvests of grain which had put the half of Ireland into the poor-house or the emigrant ship, the price of British corn in Mark Lane began to mount again to more than forty shillings the bushel. British farmers commenced in 1908

and 1909 to raise crops again worth £8 to £10 from the acre. And, incredible to state, nobody was a penny the worse ! But, in the meantime, the worst passions had been engendered between class and class, the smiling countryside had been turned into a slovenly waste ; besides the immense loss in depopulation through emigration and starvation, the towns had been filled and overfilled with the dejected and desperate refugees from the rural districts ; the seeds of Socialist discontent, planted in those crowded multitudes, had produced a crop of gravest danger to the State ; and meantime too, those thirty years had been occupied in adding fresh chapters of what were facetiously designated land reforms to the long disaster and incorrigible blundering of Mr. Gladstone's legislation. There had been all through the nineteenth century precisely three main causes of the agrarian evil in Ireland. They were : first, the alienation and hostility between the landowners and the bulk of the nation due to the blind attachment of the former to the Act of Union ; secondly, the excessive badness of the husbandry of the Irish farmers, by no means always due to faults of their own origination ; and latterly, the mounting tide of foreign competition, which regularly swept away every chance of profit and every incentive to industry, and rendered even the wholesale confiscation of rents inadequate and illusory through the larger confiscation of the value of the farmer's produce.

It is instructive, if tragi-comical, to note the accents of exultation with which the philosophic author of the great 'Life of Gladstone' claims for his departed chief the sole credit for the achievement of such colossal and disastrous misconception. Mr. Gladstone had constructed and applied with wonderful painstaking and skill a vast and blistering plaster to relieve a patient sinking under fatal hæmorrhage ; and Lord Morley cries with rapture that Mr. Gladstone 'did it all himself.' I know few passages of faithful enthusiasm in all experience which can beat the unconscious pathos of this admiring boast. 'Like the bold and sinewy athlete that he always was, he stood to his plan. . . .



Take the Land Act of 1881, in some ways the most deep-reaching of all his legislative achievements. Here he had no flowing tide, every current was against him. He carried his scheme against the ignorance of the country.' Precisely. Lord Morley is quite right. It was only against the ignorance of the country that Gladstone could have carried such a preposterous concatenation of inappropriatenesses. If the country had been well-informed and commonly conscientious, it would have been laughed out of doors in the spirit of those Irishmen who, as Lord Morley records, 'when the humour seized them, bade him send the bill to line trunks.' It did more than line trunks. It lined pockets. The Land League and the heirs of the Land League have lived on its perpetual unsettlement of Ireland, on its endless opportunities for the perpetuation of social and agrarian turmoil and animosity. In any case, it had all its chances of failure increased and multiplied a hundredfold by the Land League. In an Ireland without a serious grievance, with a patriotic landowning class united with a patriotic tenant class in helpful love of the common country, with no bands of innumerable incendiaries paid with foreign dollars to promote revolution through class war, the Land Act of Mr. Gladstone might have come as a harmless blessing to some barristers and solicitors with a following among litigious tillers of the soil and landlords greedy for the exaction of arrears. With £150,000 a year maintaining by boycott and intimidation an appeal to the most subversive passions, Ireland was certainly not a safe field for Mr. Gladstone's indescribable Land Courts 'deciding by the rule of funk.' Did any other Government, ancient or modern, ever allow and endorse the entry of £150,000 a year to stir up anarchy and civil hate? Pat Ford's cheques to Pat Egan for enforcing the unwritten law were as sacred to Mr. Gladstone as the principles of the political economy of Saturn. Why did the Government protect the Moonlighter Fund? Why? Why? Even if it had been a fund of Irish money, collected within the country for the purpose of stirring up a civil and social war, for the purpose of subsidising a propaganda of



hate and violence between citizens, for the purpose of making fellow-citizens regard fellow-citizens as lepers and outcasts beyond the pale of Christianity and humanity; even if all these devilish and uncivic crimes were being aided with native money, that money would have been stopped in the collection, and seized in transit by an Irish Government, by any civilised government between the Carpathians and Connamara. But a foreign fund avowedly raised to promote civil and social war, avowedly raised by fire-raisers and suborners of anti-human crimes; what was the English Government which was pretending to act as an Irish Government, and which laid no hand on the deposit and distribution of the American remittances? The whole fabric of the Land League would have collapsed within the first week of the stoppage of the supplies of intimidation. It would have made Edmund Burke add another illustration of the criminal complacencies of governments which betray nations and breed revolutions, if the greatest of political philosophers had witnessed Mr. Gladstone's Government prohibiting the Land League and scrupulously forwarding the Land League subsidies to social war.

Let it be added, for the final explanation, perhaps, of the revolting situation, that the Irish landlord party continued to commit every folly of sheer fatuousness, every provocation of unreasoning anger, every excess of gratuitous unpopularity which rejoices in being unpopular. With pitiful self-abasements they appealed to England: 'Have we not incurred the hatred of Ireland because we have preferred English interests?' And England replied: 'The hatred of Ireland makes you much more inconvenient than useful.' Irritated at the cold ingratitude of England, the Irish landlords flung themselves with added wrath at everything which savoured of Irish patriotism. They shrieked rather than spoke their contempt for Ireland's capacities, mental, moral, or industrial; past, present, and future. And at heart they were nearly all good Irishmen, excellent friends, kindly in all the relations of life. They were the descendants of men who had ruled Ireland for

Ireland. When they gloried in Irish unfitness for self-government, they were glorying in a libel on all that was best in their own family histories. Perhaps the ablest as certainly the most eloquent of all the advocates of this anti-Irish eccentricity was Mr. David Plunket, a representative of the University of Dublin, the famous Irish university which had bred generations of the proud and capable Irish statesmen who, but for the intrigues, the corruption, and the unlawful violence of a British Ministry, would still be continued in their descendants in the Old House in College Green. Mr. David Plunket, the kinsman of the great Plunket who had fought so splendidly against the Union, was always ready to contribute his polished culture, his genuine oratory, his distinguished and convincing style to the work of expressing the limitless contempt of his class for the countrymen of the great Plunket who still maintained the great Plunket's principles. In flawless sentences, with genuine emotion, with an occasional stammer which, strange to say, often added to the pathetic grace and ornate beauty of his best delivery. Mr. David Plunket always rose to pour scorn on Irish self-government, to belittle Irish grievances, to profess the endless devotion of his class to the England which, on both sides of the House, was plainly telling him that he and his party might be truly select, but were none the less an encumbrance and, all things considered, pretty much of a nuisance. It is hard to say whether it was the effusive feebleness of the Irish Conservatives or the effusive disloyalty of the Irish Revolutionists which did the most to intensify Mr. Gladstone's conviction, as an Imperial statesman and patriot, that under some pretext of Home Rule the Irish members must be got out of the Imperial Parliament. An Irish Parliament he was inflexibly determined never to restore; but if they could be got to take some sort of semi-colonial sub-Parliament—all name and no dignity—gilded with a fair amount of cash control, why, their room was far, far better than their company. To bribe them and get rid of them, that was to be Gladstonian Home Rule.

## CHAPTER XX

THE SESSION OF 1882—THE COERCION FIASCO—THE LAND ACT FIASCO—THE *TIMES* INVITES ME TO EXPLAIN THE CORE OF THE IRISH DIFFICULTY—GLADSTONE, CHAMBERLAIN, THE O'SHEAS, AND PARNELL—FROM KILMAINHAM TO PHENIX PARK

The *Locum Tenens* did the rest—Why I applied to the *Times*—The Arrears were the Core of the Difficulty and the Opportunity of the *Locum Tenens*—The *Times* backs my Disclosures—Kilmainham baffled if Arrears settled—Origin and Remedy of the Difficulty—Gladstone's Treaty with Parnell revived the League—Through Mr. H. Gladstone I plead for Arrears and Amnesty—Mr. Gladstone prefers a Compact with Parnell—The *Locum Tenens* refuses to resign.

My visit to Parnell in Kilmainham, my observation of what was happening in that central agitation office, my notes on the proceedings in the Derry election and the innumerable conversations which I had with all sorts of people, finally convinced me that a critical turning had arrived, and that, for the second time, I must revise my estimate of Parnell and Parnellism in Irish politics. I had already seen my former comrade desert Butt's Home Rule for the Devoy-Davitt New Departure, and thereby exchange the position of a member of the Irish representation for the valuable and picturesque post of figure-head monarch of the Land League at home and abroad. I now saw clearly that the suppression of the Land League had removed the figure-head and left the monarch, and that, for the time at least, Parnell was autocrat of his former allies and directors. I had convincing evidence also that this autocracy would not be undisputed, and I was fully prepared to see Parnell make bids in the direction of the Liberal left wing in order to counterbalance or outmanœuvre the expected defection from the side of his own



extremist section. I had received substantial proof that in the no-rent manifesto, intended by Parnell to provoke the suppression of the Land League, the signature of Michael Davitt was a forgery in the most complete sense, inasmuch as Davitt had neither signed himself nor authorised any person to sign in his name. I was quite prepared, accordingly, for Davitt's written admission to myself that the counterfeiting of his signature was an unscrupulous deception, which at once completed the impression in Mr. Forster's mind that the whole of the forces of the Land League were behind the no-rent manifesto and that the whole League must be suppressed. At the same time, I knew that the conviction and policy of the Liberal left wing, from Dilke and Chamberlain to Labouchere and Bradlaugh, was 'that coercion was clearly a failure, that Forster's methods provoked outrage and crime, that Parnell had substituted organisation for crime, and that the victory of outrage over coercion could best be changed into victory for civilised methods by the release of Parnell with a commission from the British Government to suppress crime by granting concessions.' That was what was being hourly said in the lobbies, and sometimes in the debates of the House, as well as in numerous organs of public opinion. Parnell knew exactly that the dismissal of Forster depended upon the degree in which Captain Moonlight showed himself able to outwit and defy the burlesque of coercion which was raging in Ireland, to the inconvenience of everybody except the criminal confederacy. I had innumerable instances of respectable men being arrested 'on reasonable suspicion,' to whom arrest meant heavy business losses of every description. One of my own supporters at Dungarvan had been so arrested, without the shadow of discernible reason; and his business, a large store of general goods, went into ruinous confusion in his absence, as he alone knew how to conduct it. On the other hand, when a real outrage-monger was arrested, he was usually a person who could afford to retire to Government apartments with good food and congenial company, and

thoroughly enjoy the gratifying distinction. Meantime, terrorism dogged the steps of the Ladies' Land League; nor is it necessary to accuse the women of worse deeds than the free distribution of money to a dangerous class and the frenzied iteration of appeals to resistance, which lost nothing in emphasis or force by being uttered by feminine enthusiasts. 'The women distributed the money, and Captain Moonlight, the *locum tenens*, did the rest.'

At this distance of time it is impossible for me to ascertain exactly at what date I became convinced that a distinct organisation must be at work already for the spread of more than the ordinary class of crimes, and that outrage of exceptional gravity, personal and political rather than agrarian, was probably the object of new agencies. Considering that my special endeavour—during the imprisonment of Parnell and the flight to Paris or New York of all his lieutenants who had not accompanied him to Kilmainham—was to maintain the constitutional efficiency and intact legality of the Irish electoral organisation in Great Britain; considering that in the execution of this task I was in constant contact with persons, like Byrne our secretary and Walshe our organiser, who were deeply implicated in the worst complicities; I cannot doubt that I was receiving impressions from a very early date which disclosed the gravity of the situation. 'More outrages in Ireland' formed the commonest item of every news-sheet. English sympathy with crime was not only parliamentary. As I was passing out of the door of a public meeting in Liverpool, a man had thrust himself forward, saying: 'I am an Englishman. If we had a tyrant like Forster in England we should shoot him. What are Irishmen worth?' I had hardly come back from my first visit to Dublin after the imprisonment of Parnell, when my sense of impending calamity drove me to take counsel . . . with the editor of the *Times*. A great many of us in those days recognised a thoroughly honest opponent in the old lion of Printing House Square. We did not consider it a lion endowed with overmuch tact on occasion. We knew that it was

immeasurably better acquainted with its native haunts than with Ireland, hill or valley. But it was a fair fighter. The most prominent proprietor of the *Times*, Mr. John Walter, M.P., had always impressed me in the House of Commons as one of the most upright Englishmen who ever mismanaged Irish affairs. His look of pain and horror at our outrages on the traditions of Parliament did not excite my amusement merely. He was one of several other downright and honourable Englishmen whom I regretted to be obliged to wound in their patriotic pride as often as ever I intimated that their Act of Union had not in my eyes the validity of a forged cheque. If I had told them that I was more Imperialist than they, incredulity was sure to stifle inquiry. But again and again Mr. John Walter had shown that he meant the prosperity of Ireland all the time. If Parnellism and New Departureism had never risen, we should have had many John Walters on the side of the Empire and liberty.

One evening at the end of October 1881 I sent up my card to the editor of the *Times*. Received without much delay, Mr. Chinnery, the successor of Mr. Delane, asked me : 'What can we do for you, Mr. O'Donnell, or what can you want with us ?' I told him that I wanted the generous justice of the *Times* on behalf of terrible wrongs which were impending over Ireland through the errors of the new Land Act alone. 'But your friends are impeding the Act. The no-rent manifesto seems to us to be the cause of everything ominous just now.' I replied that it was simply impossible for me to explain in a conversation what was coming. I agreed that the no-rent manifesto might cause much crime, but I was thinking of general or universal misfortune which threatened to involve tenant and landlord alike. Would the *Times* give a fair field for the exposure of the danger ? 'Give me an idea of what you mean.' I said that I meant this : Mr. Gladstone had passed a Land Act against a small number of bad landlords ? 'Yes. That is the plea of the Act.' But, as a matter of fact, every tenant in Ireland was empowered to appeal against even a



just rent, and Land Courts were already being appointed which would reduce rents wholesale by 30, 40, and 50 per cent. It was not in human nature to withstand such an incentive. The Land Courts would be swamped with 500,000 applications. 'Reductions of 30 per cent. ! And as a general rule ?' Practically as a general rule. The rural population was going mad with expectation. Who would pay rents contentedly, when refusing to pay might lead to wholesale reductions of rent ? The landlords would be driven to desperation, and despair would counsel the use of every existing defence which was still at the landlord's disposal. Just as demands for reductions became wholesale, notices to quit would become wholesale. Even if the Land Court promised the future to the tenantry, the arrears of past rent and the old rents would remain due to the landlords ; and they could meet the rush for rent reductions by the weapons which, though omnipotent still, would be useless once the tenants were fixed in their holdings under 30 per cent. reductions and with Crown guarantees against disturbance. 'Is there no provision in the Act for preventing evictions previous to the decision of the Courts ?' No provision whatever. The Act menaces the landowners with total ruin in the future, *if they allow the tenants into the Courts*, but leaves the whole of the existing livelihood of the tenant as unprotected as ever at the mercy of the landlords. To prevent future ruin the landlords must defend themselves now. 'I cannot conceive how Parliament could make such an omission. The two sides are being forced to civil war. I cannot assume that, Mr. O'Donnell.'

I repeated to Mr. Chinnery that I had not expected his ready acquiescence. I had come, just because my fears were incredible, to ask for space in his columns. 'You have not joined the Irish Land League ?' Certainly not. But I am defending all Ireland, good, bad, and indifferent, against the most stupendous idiocy which ever called itself an Act of Parliament. 'Tell me exactly what you want.' I want to be sure of space for half a dozen,

perhaps a dozen, long letters from time to time, in the *Times*, written from a non-party standpoint, giving facts and self-evident deductions, and asking English opinion for speedy remedy, as delay will be fatal. 'Well, Mr. O'Donnell, you have always played fair from your point of view. What you say is almost incredible. But if the tenants are rushing into the Courts, and if the Courts are granting large reductions wholesale, I must admit that the landlords will be face to face with a situation which may drive them to strong measures. I promise you fair space for your letters. And the *Times* will make fair comments. By the way, what will you call your communications?' I answered that perhaps *Audi Alteram Partem* would suit my object as well as any.

That was the origin of the lengthy series of lengthy letters in which I was allowed to explain to the readers of the *Times* in 1881, 1882, and 1883, how the Land Act was being blocked by the Land Act itself, how the arrears which had been overlooked by Mr. Gladstone were a vital and fatal fact, and how the theoretic protection against isolated cases of bad landlordism, as Mr. Gladstone contemplated, was become a universal measure for involving the best of landlords in the same fate as the worst. While the Ladies' Land League and the no-rent manifesto might be creating disorders by the hundred, the Land Act itself must infallibly create them by the hundred thousand. All this was to be recognised by everybody afterwards. Special arrears legislation was to be introduced afterwards. But who can overestimate the services of the *Times* and its editor, Mr. Chinnery, in proffering 'fair space and fair comment' for the early revelation of the desperate situation? If Ireland and British government in Ireland were saved from disasters and horrors a thousandfold exceeding the worst things that actually happened, if measures of wise alleviation were taken before they were utterly too late, let the thanks be given not to Downing Street, nor to Dublin Castle, nor to Kilmainham, but to Printing House Square.

On November 3, 1881, I was able to redeem my engagement to the editor of the *Times* by a lengthy letter containing a summary of the results of the first weeks of rent reduction in the Land Courts, and the resulting rush, 2000 and 4000 a day, of tenants, even the most satisfied of the previously satisfied, who wanted to fling off the third or the half of their rents. It was a deluge. Here are some of my conclusions :—

The splendid terms which the Land Courts are offering the tenantry are rousing all Ireland like a trumpet call. . . . Within a week the Land Court, sub-Commissions and all, will have work before it for three years to come. . . . Unless the Commissioners are to decide cases by the toss of a convenient coin, there is judicial occupation for generations of Land Commissioners in the contending plaints of the Irish landlords and the 600,000 tenants who require reductions of rent. During the cycles which have to elapse before these cases are decided, are the landlords to wait for the 'fair rents' which are still in the womb of the future?

The *Times* was profoundly impressed by the facts I had published, and in its first leading article of the following day, November 4, quoting me six or seven times on the leading points of my statement, it already admitted that the facts had completely altered the scope of the Act. 'It should not be forgotten that Mr. Gladstone and his leading colleagues denied throughout the Land Bill debates that rents in Ireland would be generally or largely reduced. . . . If loss can be proved, the Prime Minister said, compensation to the landlords will not be denied.' The effect of this judgment was immense. Parliament had given an order meant to authorise certain repairs, and the repairing order was turning out to be a complete and universal transfer of property from one end of Ireland to the other! The effect in Kilmainham was extreme and extremely unfavourable. 'Why the hell does not O'Donnell keep his mouth shut? What is the *Times* driving at, anyhow?' A prompt Act to save the landlords from desperation by fair compensation and to save the tenants from desperation



by fair treatment of the arrears would have left the Land League plot a mere burst balloon of malodorous gases. But not even the *Times* was to get the credit of doing good to Ireland. That was to be amicably divided by party exigencies between the wisdom of the front bench and the patriotism of the refugee of Kilmainham.

Within a week I had a further load of evidence, and could quote cases of rent reduction on estates of good reputation which swept the third and the half of the landlord's income into the pocket of his tenant and his tenant's solicitor ; nor did I hesitate to draw the moral :

When the landlords can quote the McAtavy and Enright decisions, when they can prove that the reduction of 30 or 40 per cent. on the rental of Ireland transfers five or six millions a year from the owners to the cultivators of the soil, what becomes of Mr. Gladstone's pleas of last session ?

This time the hesitations of the *Times* could assert themselves no longer. The evidence of the facts was undeniable and undenied. Popular opinion in Ireland alleged that the Land Commissioners had been ordered to give big reductions in order to counteract the no-rent manifesto. At any rate, there was the result. The most indulgent landowner in Ireland could expect nothing above the level of Griffith's valuation. With a pardonable fling at my fairness to landlords—the *Times*, of course, being unaware that I had claimed fair treatment for the landlord all through—the leading organ avowed that 'when a wholesale reduction to the level of Griffith's valuation is to be attempted, it would not be possible to impugn the force of the case which Mr. O'Donnell, of all men in the world, puts forward on behalf of Irish landlords.' The leading organ had not informed itself that the restoration of the Irish House of Lords, as an insuperable pledge and guarantee of the security of Irish property, formed an essential article of the Home Rule charter of Mr. Butt's party.

In a fortnight's time the leading organ had been entirely converted by the facts, the incontrovertible facts, and in

its first leading article of November 26, it drew emphatic attention to another of my letters under the title of '*Audi Alteram Partem*,' which filled nearly two columns of its space that morning, and which was literally stuffed with facts from Ireland. Lords Salisbury and Lansdowne had both declared that peasant proprietary on a basis of fair purchase was the true alternative to this universal revolution and confiscation Act. 'The Conservatives, Mr. O'Donnell says, are the best friends of Ireland and of Home Rule. . . . It is only by giving compensation to the Irish landlords, Mr. O'Donnell declares, that the Irish land question can be settled. . . . Let there be fair compensation to the Irish landlords, and let them have it quickly.' It was amusing as well as sad to read how Mr. Gladstone's most faithful supporters controverted my views and impugned my motives. To say that the Land Act was a failure in itself, and in consequence of its own hopeless contradiction of all the promises and pledges on which it had been passed, was simple blasphemy against the highest wisdom. No, the opposition to the Land Act was due to the no-rent manifesto, and when the sullen conspirators in Kilmainham had been either coerced by superior strength or converted by irresistible persuasion, all would be well for Ireland and, still more important, for the passers of the Land Act. It became more than ever the policy of the Liberal left wing to make conciliation with Parnell the avowed condition of Irish peace and Liberal victory. As a matter of simple fact, a Peasant Proprietary Act would have left the Land Leaguers without a single adherent outside of the Ribbon Fenians like Mr. Egan and Mr. Brennan and the rest of the New Departers who wanted to use agrarianism for revolution. In face of a Peasant Proprietary Act Mr. Parnell would have found his following as bare of the frieze-coats as if he were a professor of comparative philology. But Parnell was now an asset of English advanced Liberalism, and no reforms were to impede the cultivation of his utility. My doctrine that 'compensation of landlords is protection to tenants' was denounced in private letter after private

letter from the adherents of the Kilmainham circle. 'Peasant proprietary on Land League terms, when the garrison should get nothing more than they deserved, was totally different from proprietary by purchase such as the *Times* and its writers wanted to fasten on Ireland's neck.' Meantime, Mr. T. P. O'Connor was exciting the grateful cheers of every Parnellite crowd for his burning demonstrations at Chicago and San Francisco that the Irish tenantry 'were paying no rent and were boycotting the Land Act, and would continue to boycott it until the gates of Kilmainham, the Bastille of the Castle, had been opened, and Parnell and Dillon had been restored to freedom and the love of the Irish nation.' The tenants were 'boycotting the Land Act' by sending in applications for fair rent by the hundred thousand! I quoted in the *Times* of this period a delightful placard from the Derry election of Mr. Gladstone's Irish solicitor-general which filled with sunny joy the Gallios who think vain things of party politics.

Mr. Solicitor-General Porter has placarded County Derry with the tempting list of rents reduced by 40, 50, and 60 per cent. : and his Committee adjure the tenant-farmers of Derry, 'if they want the honest administration of the Land Act, to vote for Porter!'

The fair comments of the *Times*, which the editor had chivalrously promised me at the outset of my heavy task, were now become frank and earnest adoption of my leading pleas. By the overwhelming evidence which the leading journal had allowed me to marshal, columns long, in its most conspicuous pages, I had proved my case to the hilt : that the Land Act was obstructing itself ; that the wholesale reduction of rents without compensation which was overwhelming the landlords was also driving them to defend themselves by insisting on full payment of past rents ; and as arrears were general, that general evictions with all their horrors could only be prevented by a State payment of the arrears which tenants could not pay and landlords could not afford to forgo. In a letter entitled 'The Core of



the Irish Difficulty ' I had summed up the actual situation in these words, and I knew that, thanks to the publicity and public spirit of the *Times*, the conviction was now universal that there must be compensation to the landlord if the tenant was to be relieved :—

The Land Act by itself is of little or no use. It allows the landlord to sue for arrears of rent. Long before the applications for fair rent in the Courts can be adjudicated upon, the tenant will find himself dispossessed, and his estates and ' all his rights will have passed into his landlord's hands.'

My remedy was given in these words :—

Let the landlords have compensation quickly. Let them have a year's rent on the security of their property, when you have made that property safe on the guarantee of compensation, and the landlords in turn will let the tenants into the Land Court. They will settle easily about arrears.

#### THE ORIGIN AND NATURE OF THE ARREARS DIFFICULTY

Writers and speakers who deal with this crucial era of Irish history will totally fail to appreciate its meaning and lesson if they have not mastered the significance of the arrears difficulty which I had to explain in the *Times* at this period. If I quote some passages from my letters in the leading organ, it is simply because it was I alone who brought the facts before the British public. Nobody but I described the peril, because even Mr. Gladstone had framed his entire Land Act in entire ignorance that the fundamental problem even existed. If the wit of man were to search a thousand years for a more extraordinary instance of the incapacity of a foreign administration, even when personified by a statesman of the highest ability and sincerity, it might fail to discover anything to compare with Mr. Gladstone's omission to mention the arrears in dealing with a situation which was entirely dominated by their influence. Here is my account of the origin of the difficulty :—

What is the origin of the evil which now confronts the legislator? Simply this, the year 1876 was the last year for three years in which anything like a fair out-turn of the potato crop was obtained. The value of the potato crop in 1876 was according to official returns some £12,500,000, the total value of the potato crops during the three years 1877, 1878, and 1879 amounted to less than the out-turn of the single year 1876. It ought to have amounted to three times that quantity. Instead of more than £36,000,000 during these three years, the Irish cultivators received less than £12,000,000. The deficit amounted to £25,000,000, which there was no earthly means of making up to any appreciable extent from any other source or quarter. But though the people no longer had those £25,000,000, and therefore could not pay them in satisfaction of the most lawful of debts, every pound of rent which was due in the prosperous year of 1876 was equally due in each of the semi-famine years which followed, and we know that even in prosperous years the produce of the soil was barely sufficient, and according to the Land Commissioners was often insufficient, to meet the demands of the rent owners and landlords. Barely able to meet their engagements in good years, whence could the people meet their engagements in bad years? And there had been three terribly bad years for the Irish farmer. There, sir, is the root and substance of the arrears difficulty, which is now distracting the country, clogging the application of remedial legislation, converting a mass of desperate creatures into sympathisers with intimidation, and indefinitely postponing the commencement of a better state of things.

The British Premier, the ablest of men, had merely omitted to perceive the meaning of three years of semi-famine which had facilitated the whole of the incipient revolution. The Irish farmers had lost the equivalent of £25,000,000 within three years; and there was a reason for agricultural discontent, which the Land League had aggravated, but which it had never created. I went on to point out that no-rent would draw fewer adherents in proportion as the farmers had more to lose by risking their farms:—

You may tell me that 'no rent' has aggravated the situation. Let me grant it; but 'no rent' did not create the situation.

On the contrary, 'no rent' would have had vastly fewer supporters if it were not for the existence of a numerous class of tenants in hopeless arrear who found that the withholding of current rents, which perhaps they were in a condition to pay, involved no appreciable worsening of the position in which they already were on account of burdens of overdue rent which they were utterly unable to pay. It is not so difficult to persuade a man to keep in his pocket the current year's rent when he knows that the payment of the current year's rent will not save him from the previous consequence of being unable to pay the rent that accrued in the seasons of scarcity and want. On the other hand, it is exceedingly difficult to persuade a man to refuse to satisfy the lawful debt which he has the means to satisfy, when he knows that he may forfeit an unencumbered farm by such conduct.

The Land Act, the best of Land Acts, could promise no protection to men who, even if they had a good season now, were dragging the convict's chain of the unpaid and unpayable rents of the three seasons of semi-famine. Here, indeed, was a fine recruiting-ground for Captain Moonlight. Englishmen had seen, and could understand, the occurrence of such consequences in crises of the industrial world. Was agrarian industry destitute of similar weakness and exasperation?

Fix the figure of 'Irish outrages' at the wildest estimate of alarmist exaggeration, and who does not see the hopeless tenants, the tenants without a chance, the sons of the men in arrear menaced with eviction, no matter what the Land Act may promise to less miserable men; who does not see the most needy, the most pitiable, and the most in want of protection by law, and the least protected by law, forming the force of the criminal bands who seek to drag their more prosperous neighbours into the same plight as themselves in order that they may have, at any rate, no more to fear than their prosperous neighbours? If the thing was happening in England, you could understand it at once. You could understand at once why miners who have been locked out often seek to intimidate their more fortunate brethren from working when willing to work. You could understand why hand-loom weavers have often destroyed the machinery by which other operatives or some of their own body could earn a livelihood.



# THE REMEDY FOR THE DIFFICULTY

Was the peace of Ireland worth half a dozen millions sterling? Was the last chance of the land legislation, which posed as the dawn of a new age in the ruined country, worth a fraction of the sum which England had recently expended to conquer Zulus or to chastise the Afghans? I suggested that a far smaller sum than this might enable the Irish landlords to come to terms with their impoverished tenantry; and, as it happened, the sum adopted in the Government Arrears Bill was exactly what I had proposed in the *Times*.

There need be no great difficulty about settling the arrears difficulty. The arrears fall naturally into three classes or parts. In the first place, there is the part which cannot possibly be paid and which is abandoned as utterly irrecoverable by every landlord of common sense and common humanity in the country. In the second, there is the part which the tenant might be able to pay if he knew that the payment would secure him against ruin on account of that which he can never pay; and thirdly, there is the part which the tenant may not be able to pay now, but which he might pay in the future if he was tided over the ruin to-day. I believe that at the present moment the Irish landlords would be delighted beyond expression to exchange all their claims for arrears against an immediate payment of six or seven millions sterling. I believe that wise statesmanship, that the prospects of returning peace, of restored order, of the fresh chances of security and popularity under a better system in the future would entirely reconcile them to exchange their arrears claim against a payment of £3,000,000 or £4,000,000.

Unless you get rid of the arrears you can have no peace and no hopeful future. Unless you get rid of the arrears Ireland will cost you vastly more than £3,000,000 or £4,000,000. You cannot effect a revolution 'a social revolution' entirely 'on the cheap.' You paid £20,000,000 to do justice in the West Indies; you paid £30,000,000 or £40,000,000 within the past few years for the luxury of burning Ulundi and devastating Cabul. I suggest to you the best and most profitable investment which you were ever asked to make during so many centuries of your government in Ireland.

These anticipations of the peace, conciliation, and

prosperity which I foretold as a consequence of a settlement of the arrears grievance, which was not only a grievance but a counsel of despair, will appear absurdly exaggerated to the commonplace critic of what actually occurred in Ireland. We know that the Arrears Bill was passed, and we now know that the ensuing period for ten years at least, and in a very real sense down to the present day, was an era of continued disorder, discontent, outrage, and class hates. I might content myself with remarking that the immediate effect was good, but I do not choose to balk the objection in that manner. It is true that my foretellings were very inadequately realised. It is quite true that the settlement of the arrears did not become a settlement of the situation. But in my capacity of prophet of progress I had not bargained for the Gladstone Cabinet employing the arrears settlement to enhance and restore the domination of the Land League in its new edition of 'National League,' nor did I contemplate the possibility of Mr. Gladstone devoting the next eight years of his policy in Ireland to booming the very man whose connexions with outside incendiaries and whose subsidies from outside incendiaries made him permanently incapable, even when he was fitfully desirous, of promoting anything but class hates and mob rule in Ireland. If the Parliament had abolished the arrears grievance on its demerits, if the Parliament had inaugurated a large measure of voluntary land purchase on the lines of a lesser Wyndham Act,—a measure which would have aided struggling landlords and encouraged progressive tenants at the same time,—most certainly there would have been great peace in the Irish rural community where it was the incorrigible and ineradicable mission of Parnellism to perpetuate war. To see Mr. Gladstone wooing the voice which had called on Irishmen to treat one another 'worse than lepers of old,' and, like a Moorish Sultan, asking Raisuli to be governor instead of brigand, certainly did not appear within the crystal which had shown me my vision. I had explicitly recognised in my letters in the *Times* that a State-assisted peasant

proprietary could follow, but not precede, the shaking off of burdens which I advocated :—

Even those Conservatives like Mr. W. H. Smith, M.P., who see no salvation except in a State-assisted peasant proprietary must recognise in the arrears difficulty the danger on which all their hope may go to pieces. How in truth can the State approach the assisted purchase of farms by the cultivators so long as the cultivator is inextricably crushed with the burdens of past years ? What uncertainties, what undue pressure, what corrupt bargains, must attend transactions between landlords with a legal right to demand unpayable arrears and cultivators tempted recklessly to pay off those arrears in that future price of the land which is to be borrowed from the general tax-payer ? The arrears, the arrears, the arrears ! They meet you at every turn !

I confess that I made a certain strategic use of the arrears obstacle in order to influence Mr. Gladstone himself, who was looking everywhere, I knew, for an explanation of the check to his panacea that would not be too unflattering to his sense of authorship. The crisis in Ireland was so terrible that I felt justified in humouring even its chief author, if, by so doing, I could lead him to revise at once his deplorable work. He was, in a way, an intellectual giant ; but he was exceedingly human. I was told subsequently that the following passage, in which I pointed out that Mr. Butt's Land Bill did not suffer from the worst difficulty which hindered the Land Act of 1881, was read with the greatest satisfaction by Mr. Gladstone. The author of the Act was gratified by the interpretation that, if his work was progressing slowly, it had met a situation of exceptional trouble. Really my words had only pointed out that the assembled wisdom had acted very idiotically in rejecting the moderate measure proposed by my glorious old chief at a time when moderate measures could have had much smoother sailing than their vast successors. This seems to be fairly evident from my language :—

The Land Bill of Isaac Butt in 1874 and 1875 was not so good



a Land Bill as the measure of the present Prime Minister, but if carried then, it would have practically settled the land question. Why? Because there was then no general body of monstrous and unpayable outstanding arrears from three consecutive years of semi-famine. What is wanted to give the better Land Act of the present Government the advantages possessed by the inferior land proposals of Mr. Butt? Surely, of course, to place it on the same level respecting arrears. The arrears did not exist in Mr. Butt's time. There was no necessity to clear them away. They do exist and terribly exist to-day. Then clear them away.

The Romans would have called me little more than *Adolescens* when I wrote those lines, and I am to-day a grey-haired sojourner in many lands; but every word was accurate, and every counsel practical; nor was I responsible for Mr. Gladstone's more-than-Sicambrian adoration of what he had called on all civilisation to behold him destroy. I suppose that I ought to be almost vain of the sudden success of my recommendations. The *Times* formally adopted my description of the arrears question in the following words: 'The arrears question is in reality the core of the Irish difficulty, as it was called a few weeks ago by Mr. O'Donnell in a letter printed in our columns. But precisely because it is the core of the Irish difficulty, it is not at all likely to prove easy of solution.' As a fact, also, the Gladstone Government did recognise that they had passed a Land Act which totally ignored 'the core of the Irish difficulty,' and did pass an Arrears Act which paid or advanced enough to free the tenants from past liabilities and to free the landlords from the immediate prospect of starvation in many cases. But the game of party was played down to the last move. Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Parnell combined to do without the *Times* and its correspondent. The strictest orders came from Kilmainham that O'Donnell was to have nothing to do with the Arrears Bill which the Parnellites were to introduce. All the ministerial organs were instructed to maintain that the Land Act was a perfect success, or would be as soon as Mr. Parnell had learned to recognise his master in the author of so many

reforms for Ireland, and that the whole Irish difficulty, core and all, was about to disappear for ever from the field of Parliament. When at length the Kilmainham compact was arranged, when Mr. Parnell had been extracted from his refuge after subscribing a pretty promise to assist Liberal principles in Ireland for the future, and when Mr. Gladstone had made quite a pretty show of pleasure at the conversion of this stiff-necked Saul, who had now promised to mend some little defects in the Land Act instead of presuming to obstruct it, the scene was almost as sentimentally sweet as a pastoral comedy of the eighteenth century . . . until the lurid thunderbolt of the Phoenix Park murder suddenly revealed some details which had been overlooked. There were some desperadoes, it appeared, who admired Mr. Parnell very much when he was inoculating social leprosy and spreading boycotts and proclaiming 'no rents,' who had quite believed that he meant to wade to the knees in Saxon gore, or thereabout, and who were furiously disgusted at his taking the Saxon shilling after all as a repentant ministerialist; who were determined in fact 'to keep the ball rolling,' even though he had dismissed the Ladies' Land League, and wanted no more trouble of that sort.

Personally I was so thoroughly convinced that Parnell wanted to cut adrift from his Moonlight tail, I did not confine myself to my letters in the *Times*. After all, those letters had been a revelation of grave facts which depended not on Mr. Parnell at all, but on the inherent badness of the Land Act. Though there had never been a no-rent manifesto, the Land Act was absolutely blocked by the blind rush of hundreds of thousands of tenants who wanted rent reductions on the one side, and by the desperate attitude of ten thousand landlords who could exact arrears or eviction by way of defence. Driving six omnibuses abreast through Temple Bar was a feeble joke compared to getting the rent cases of half a million of applicants through a couple of dozen Land Commission Courts, thence to be carried into an Appeal Court towards the end of the next

century ! But, in addition, orders had been given that Ireland was to be made ungovernable by England, that Captain Moonlight was to take the place of the imprisoned chiefs ; and, superinduced upon the chaos created by the incitements and impediments of the Land Act—promising 50 per cent. reductions of rent, threatening eviction and total ruin—the result was a welter of lawlessness and ruthlessness which foreboded the worst catastrophes. I determined to appeal directly to Mr. Herbert Gladstone, the son of the Premier, who had always appeared a most courteous and fair-minded young legislator, besides being his father's son. In a series of letters to Mr. H. J. Gladstone, M.P., entirely spontaneous on my part, entirely devoid of any character of negotiation or bargaining on behalf of anybody, I spoke from my own personal knowledge of the internal situation in Ireland, that the release of Parnell would be an immense work of pacification, that Parnell was anything but irreconcilable, that an Arrears Bill would act like oil on troubled waters, that Mr. Forster's coercion was only exasperating without coercing. My exposure of the arrears block was in Mr. Gladstone's hands since many months. I gave the patriots in Kilmainham credit for the best that I could reasonably or plausibly attribute to them. I was writing for Mr. Gladstone through his son, and I strove to produce a favourable impression for my clients. I wanted to see Kilmainham empty. I wanted to see Parnell, Dillon, every suspect, a free man again ; above all because incarceration on suspicion was despotic and offensive ; and none the less offensive because it was, as in the actual case, pampered, ridiculous, ineffective for everything that was good or useful. I passed the state of Ireland in review. I dwelt upon Mr. Forster's ineffectual ferocity that was more comical than ferocious. I quoted instances of the blundering zeal of the soldier-police, who were neither half-police nor half-soldiers. I cited illustrations of the indiscriminate repression by the *ad hoc* coercion magistrates, well-meaning men enough like Clifford Lloyd, who simply bungled 'arrest on suspicion' because it was the only thing that



could be done with this absurd Siberia-and-sugar. I have to quote myself, because the work which I did was done by nobody else. At the same time, my excerpts will indicate the real history of this sorry period of unconstitutional administration by muddle in Ireland, which I was bringing directly under Mr. Gladstone's eyes through the medium of his son.

I gave first some specimens of the foolish brutality shown to lady leaguers who were doing no harm, illustrating the class who were taking the place of the male martyrs ; item, a threatened interference with the temporary shelters—a really good work—which the lady leaguers were erecting for evicted tenantry ; item, important resolutions of the clergy of the Archdiocese of Cashel, at once denouncing coercion and condemning crime. I specially singled out this Cashel meeting, because I wanted to let Mr. Gladstone see that in Tipperary, which was Mr. Dillon's constituency, the highest authorities were against disorder. I expected that this fact would benefit Mr. Dillon in Kilmainham.

#### 1. *Arbitrary Imprisonment of late M.P.'s Sister :—*

Besides the renewed questioning about the shooting circular, the case of Miss Anne Kirk, sister of the late M.P. for Louth, Mr. Harley Kirk, long Mr. A. M. Sullivan's colleague, will be brought before the House. This lady has been thrown into Limerick Jail for three months by Clifford Lloyd in default of finding bail for good conduct. The correspondent of the *London Standard* to-day points out that Miss Kirk 'indignantly denied the charge of inciting not to pay rents, and of course could not in honour offer bail when she wholly denied the charge of illegal action.' The family of Harley Kirk is most respected. Mr. A. M. Sullivan could tell you how deeply this outrage will be resented.

#### 2. *Arbitrary Imprisonment of Other Ladies :—*

What can be more utterly mean and provocative than casting ladies like Miss Kirk, Miss O'Connor, sister of the M.P. for Galway, Mrs. Moore, and similar persons into jail without trial or verdict, under an insulting order to find bail for good conduct which they cannot honourably obey ?

3. *Menaced Prohibition of Huts for Evicted Tenants :—*

By the way, let Mr. Forster beware of endorsing Clifford Lloyd's policy of preventing the erection of Land League huts for evicted tenants. If the huts are stopped, it will simply drive the people to desperate courses, and outrage will increase. There is a section of fanatics in the League already who counsel the League to supply no more shelters for evicted tenants, but to throw the distressed families upon the poor rate. The money not spent on huts may be spent infinitely worse.

If the Land League be prevented by Government from supplying huts for evicted tenants, it will be exonerated in the eyes of the people, and the hate and revenge excited will be directed upon the Government and its supporters.

4. *Risk of a League of Labourers joining the Discontented Farmers :—*

I have received further accounts of the labourers' movement. It is very, very serious, and the Land League will have to head it within a few weeks, if there be not a new departure in Government policy.

5. *Resolutions of Cashel Archdiocese against Coercion and Crime :—*

Resolved that we, the clergy of the Archdiocese of Cashel and Emly, tender our united congratulations to the members of the advanced, active, and earnest Irish Parliamentary party for having faithfully resisted to the utmost of their power the efforts of the Government to gag, tyrannise, and coerce this country.

Resolved, that every species of outrage committed against person or property, but especially on dumb and defenceless animals, is to be earnestly and sincerely deprecated, and we shall exert all the influence we possess in our respective parishes to prevent the perpetration of this class of offences; that midnight raids made for the purpose of vengeance or intimidation on poor and unprotected families or individuals be most strenuously denounced by the clergy and discouraged by every right-minded Irishman.

Resolved, that we demand from the Government the immediate cessation of evictions for arrears of rent, the restoration of our constitutional rights, and the release of our imprisoned patriots.

Here, indeed, is a chapter in the recent history of Ireland which, even in the brief extracts presented above, reveal

depths of popular suffering and governmental muddling, which an Irish Nationalist can only adequately characterise by saying that they are the natural result of the ignorant government of foreigners. And the panacea of well-meaning, incompetent, obstinate Mr. Forster was simply to keep on coercing, and imprisoning without trial, and muddling in all directions . . . until peace and order should prevail. I remember bringing a Parisian friend down to the House, and getting him a place in a gallery, when Mr. Forster was making some observations. '*Une tête d'Alsacien,*' whispered my friend, after he had studied a few moments the four-square earnestness of the downright Yorkshireman. 'Get an idea into an Alsatian's head, and you will never get it out.' I presume to think that I did my duty both to Ireland and the general State in stating all these facts in letter after letter, intended for the information of the distinguished statesman who was trying to redeem Ireland without the responsible advice of Ireland itself. I renew my ancient thanks to Mr. Herbert J. Gladstone, both for his reception of my communications, and for the many important inquiries which assisted me to supply the missing links of argument. I worked from duty alone, and the magnanimous statesmanship of all British parties may have admired my virtue, but continued unanimously to maintain the British party tradition. Let me conclude my references to this correspondence at a critical time by giving the proof that I recommended the Government to commence 'by open and fearless consultation, to call the Irish representatives to co-operation and, therefore, to responsibility.' Not one word did I write in favour of any kind of 'treaty' or 'compact' or 'tacit arrangement.' England, I maintained, should deal openly and frankly with Ireland. That was the way to change coercion into peace and prosperity. The influential persons who were moulding the Premier's ideas preferred the backstairs method, and instead of consulting the hundred members from Ireland and frankly abolishing unconstitutional rule before all the world, privily arranged with Mr. Pat Ford's stipendiary



that he was to get the credit of indispensable reform, and was, in return, to show a certain favour to Mr. Gladstone and a certain disfavour to Captain Moonlight, henceforth a superseded agent. Captain Moonlight declined to be superseded. He had been reinforced by the murder captain known as 'Number One' for another twelvemonth at least. A little later Mr. Pat Ford's dynamiters came upon the scene. That was all that the British Government had earned by preferring a parti-political bargain to the public co-operation of all Ireland.

May I say (I wrote to the Premier's courteous son) that I do trust that there will be immediately the opening of a new chapter, and that the indispensable *premier pas* will be taken. Victory, honourable and enduring, is certain. *The statesman* who will have the splendid courage and far-seeing genius to commence, by open and fearless consultation, to call the Irish representatives to co-operation and, therefore, to responsibility, will reap the grandest reward of our time, and will have effected a unique reform in the relations of the two countries. Even to fail in such a work were glorious, but there can be no failure where the occasion invites, the circumstances are favourable, and the yearnings of all manner of men have already prepared the event. Now or never. How earnestly I write this!

So I wrote to Mr. Herbert J. Gladstone in April 1882, and, beyond all possibility of doubt, if the British Government, forgetting the instincts of party rule, had made the appeal and presented the programme of constitutional and agrarian reforms suggested by the failures of the past two years, the result would have been a great work of conciliation. Release of alleged suspects, payment of arrears, facilitation of land purchase on generous terms to venders and purchasers, a real police system, instead of the picturesque columns of Royal Irish constable-soldiers, or supplementing these Irish Guards; nearly everything might still be repaired on these terms. *But it must be an open transaction between the State and the nation.* There were crowds of Conservatives on both sides of the Irish Sea who would have helped it through with enthusiasm.

But then it would not have been a party government arrangement, and the veteran orator of Parliament was a party government man through and through. 'Mr. Parnell has the Irish vote in his pocket. He can put down crime. If I offer to release him, on condition of receiving his future support for Liberal principles in Ireland, I both end Irish disorder and establish an Irish Liberal contingent. This member for Dungarvan, who writes as if there were no party government in existence, has given us some useful intelligence, but an arrangement with Parnell is the only way out.' Such, I take it, was the essence of Mr. Gladstone's reasoning and action. Under what is called the British Constitution, you can only regard the nation through the medium of the party. Perhaps it suited neither party to be quite destitute of the opportunities afforded by the Irish question. I remember meeting an exceptionally shrewd Conservative, the late Sir William Marriot, in an out-of-the-way Continental town, where we talked a good deal together. I had expressed some wonder that the Conservatives had not given their aid to the settlement of the Home Rule demand. 'My dear sir,' cried Sir William Marriot, 'so far as the Conservatives are concerned, if Home Rule and the Home Rule question did not exist, it would be advisable to invent them. The English electorate would have been in full cry after some infernal reform in England—the land, or the Church, or the House of Lords—but for the Home Rule question. So long as we can keep the Home Rule question on the run, we are not such fools as to bring its valuable existence to an untimely close. God save Ireland! May she never cease from troubling and never be at rest.' Sir William Marriot blurted out, in gay bravado to a retired parliamentarian, a line of policy which is not confined to either party. Yet, after all, supreme as are the considerations of party tactics, I doubt if the net profit to England and the English Constitution from the traditional treatment of Ireland has been really worth the Black Famine and the Phoenix Park assassinations.

I have no doubt that Mr. Herbert Gladstone made the use of my letters which he deemed that they were suited to serve. As I was never a man who had an axe to grind ; as I never made or touched any gain from politics, Irish or other ; and as I was known to speak just what I judged accurate without fear or favour ; I was properly regarded by professional politicians as an unpractical character. But many people knew that my word, so far as I understood, was trustworthy. I was no admirer of Mr. Gladstone's legislation, and he never gave me a friendly word in his life ; but I found, at all events, that his policy towards Mr. Parnell resulted in the chief of the suppressed Land League returning to Parliament, which was what I wanted. Previous to the reconciliation between Parnell and Gladstone, much had happened besides. Personally I had ceased to look after Nationalist affairs, in the absence of the Parnellites, within about six months from Parnell's arrest in October 1881. As they became surer of non-arrest in England, the dispersed followers of the gentlemen in Kilmainham began to slip back. I had been obliged, in conjunction with Mr. Richard Lalor of Tannakil, M.P. for Queen's County, to issue the summons for the meeting of the Parliamentary party at the opening of the session of 1882 owing to the flight or imprisonment of the appropriate officials. I called the party meeting at Westminster 'in consequence of the Government prohibition of free speech and public liberty in Ireland,' which prevented deliberations in the City Hall, Dublin, where the party had met the previous years. I added that I sent the summons to the public press 'in order to guard it from the risks of petty larceny under the present administration of her Majesty's postal services.' This was a thoughtful allusion to the searching of the correspondence of Irish members, which had returned to practice of late, and which caused that stout Radical, Mr. J. Cowen, M.P., to receive letters for Irish members under cover to himself and to distribute them openly to the addressees in the House of Commons. We played at Russia in Poland with great seriousness.



From the appearance of my letters to the *Times*, however, which revealed that the rottenness of the Land Act, and not the might of Mr. Parnell, was blocking the Land Court, it was felt by my Parnellite friends or colleagues that I had done an unforgivable thing. Parnellism was always nine-tenths bluff, and contact with facts was equally dreaded and resented. Parnell was still leader of only one-fourth of the Irish representation, and until the electorate had been extended on his lines, and until the consummation of the Liberal alliance, his position was very insecure. Fortunately for him, he was first promoted to being an auxiliary, and next taken as a partner, by Mr. Gladstone, just when his old friends of Ribbon Fenianism on both sides of the Atlantic, who had built his first ascendancy, were becoming more than dubious—and with the best reason—over the genuine or artificial irreconcilableness of their evasive hero. When Mr. C. S. Parnell, menaced by the Invincibles, came under the benevolent protection of her Britannic Majesty's police, it was decidedly good for him that Gladstone's favour, or belief in his utility, never faltered.

The ensuing period of Parnell's career—his slippery, twisting, insincere, opportunist career—during which he was at the same time to remain the avenging angel for Messrs. Egan and Ford and to become the fond ally for Mr. Gladstone and Lord Rosebery, is one of the most interesting studies in political psychology which can be discovered. As an historian I am limited to the more obvious sides of the phenomenon. Before proceeding to examine the Ribbon Fenian side of his existence, let me finish in brief with the nature of his conciliation with Mr. Gladstone over the Land Act. Briefly put, this was the compact: Parnell was to accept gracefully the part of having been the guilty obstacle to the success of an admirable piece of legislation—which only required some easy amendments to be as near perfection as mortal work could be—and, on the other hand, the magnanimous author of the Land Act, on condition of Parnell's promise to assist the great work

in the future, was to give him as much credit as possible for the substitution of a system of beneficent legislation for Forsterian coercion. In this way both the high contracting parties could feel empowered to blow their own trumpets. Mr. Parnell at once began trumpeting, and all his admiring biographers and literary men have been trumpeting ever since, 'that he had routed coercion, that Gladstone had been glad to consult him in the place of Forster, that the Liberal party was pledged to reform in Ireland, that self-government was on the way.' Mr. Gladstone and the Gladstonians proclaimed that Parnell had been beaten by the Land Act, that he had withdrawn the no-rent manifesto, that he would be found aiding, instead of hindering, the good government of Ireland! If Ford and Egan thought that Parnell was really going to help England to exercise good government in Ireland, there would not be a dollar in the Parnell locker within a month. But to finish with Mr. Gladstone's own trumpet. In Morley's 'Life of Gladstone,' i. 229, there is a lovely specimen of the Premier's own method. Writing to the Queen on May 3, 1882, Mr. Gladstone announces his absolutely fictitious triumph as follows :—

There had been two, and only two, vital powers of commanding efficacy in Ireland, the Land Act and the Land League ; they had been locked in a combat of life and death ; and the cardinal question was which of the two would win. From the serious effort to amend the Land Act by the Arrears Bill of the Nationalists, from the speeches made in support of it, and from information voluntarily tendered to the Government as to the views of the leaders of the League, the Cabinet believed that those who governed the Land League were now conscious of having been defeated by the Land Act on the main question, that of paying rent.

Which shows that queens do not get more accurate information than humbler individuals. 'No rent' had caused many outrages but very few non-payments. The Land Act was mainly 'locked in a combat of life and death' with its own innumerable defects. The no-rent manifesto had

been a brazen bluff to lead Forster to suppress the Land League and to confer autocracy on Parnell by the dispersion of a hundred centres of hostility to his position. Queen Victoria might have been Queen Titania so far as fact was concerned with this fairy-tale. It is a pity that Lord Morley has not let us know whether Mr. Gladstone also wrote to his Sovereign about the nice behaviour of Mr. Parnell in 'not insisting on the release of all the other suspects,' as a distinguished Liberal put it. The astute Parnell did not want 'the release of all the other suspects' for a few days anyway. He wanted to have time to arrange matters first: to interview Davitt on exit from Portland and to give that formidable chief the correct view of what had happened; to send the correct news to Mr. Patrick Ford and the *Irish World* in New York; to make at least one defiant speech against England, which Mr. Gladstone would not seriously condemn, as it would not be against the Land Act. Each of the high contracting parties was now full of consideration for the other. As Lord Morley tells us, 'Those of the Cabinet who had the best chance of knowing, were convinced that Mr. Parnell was sincerely anxious for the pacification of Ireland.' And I also, the omniscient and confidential historian, am equally convinced that, from that Kilmainham compact out, Mr. Parnell, having upturned Irish society from its lowest dregs, was 'sincerely anxious' to pacificate it again; in friendly co-operation with Mr. Gladstone for choice; but, of course, with Mr. C. S. Parnell on top. If Mr. Parnell could only get the control of the Irish finances to solace and reward his merry men; and such a measure of self-government as he could represent as 'a great step in advance;' and if he could utilise Devoy, and Ford, and Egan at the same time; why, many an acrobat has jumped through a less difficult set of hoops in Lord Sanger's circus. Parnell never meant to destroy the British Empire. He was far too intelligent to think he could, and far too fond of the pleasant side of life to waste his years in unnecessary exertion. Let him get on top himself, and he was quite



ready to become head pacificator of Ireland. To govern Ireland from a cosy villa at Eltham, to be the honoured ally of British premiers and one of the leading personages of European society—that was quite enough for a gentleman who loved himself and Ireland as did Mr. C. S. Parnell. He never liked Irish society, not even that of his colleagues ; but he never meant Ireland more harm than was absolutely necessary to put himself on top ; and he did not think that any harm at all.

In examining the nature of Mr. Gladstone's policy towards Parnellism, I must also guard myself against doing or seeming to do injustice to Mr. Gladstone. He was perfectly justified, by every tradition of his office, in presenting the case for his Government in as good a light as he could. Besides, he loved his Land Act, and he was passionately convinced that it would do great benefit to Ireland. I, who am above all things impartial, frankly and enthusiastically admit that the Gladstone Land Act of 1881 could have done infinitely more good, and no hurt at all, if circumstances had been different. To take one circumstance alone, that ferocious hate which the popular masses were so easily induced to bear against the Irish landlords, and which converted the Land Act into such a terrible engine of landlord destruction, could never have arisen if the Irish landlords had not been misled for generations to pose as the friends of English rule and the enemies of Irish rule. If the landlords had been patriots, if they had occupied since generations every platform of Irish right, if they had swarmed in thousands to the banner of a Grattan Parliament and Imperial federation which glorious Isaac Butt had set up, if they had been Irishmen first, and everything else a long way afterwards—all the ink in all the inkpots of the *Irish World* of New York could no more hurt an Irish landlord than it could hurt the Prince de Ligne in Belgium or the Prince von Schwartzenburg in Bohemia. The Irish landlords had given up Ireland for the Act of Union, and the Act of Union flung them under the heels of the Land League of Ireland and

America! Mr. Gladstone, an English statesman loving Irish prosperity, but still an English or non-Irish statesman, could hardly do better than he did. He was naturally anxious to give his Land Act of 1881 a fair chance. He had passed a couple of most important Irish measures already with scant reward. His Land Act of 1870 had been intended to complete the reform of the agricultural situation, and the first failure of crops, mainly due to bad and lazy husbandry, had been the excuse for the Land League within nine years later! He had disestablished the Irish Protestant Church, and lightened it of £6,000,000, in order to pacify the Fenians,—who had no sectarian animosities whatever,—and now even the parish priests and curates of the Irish Catholic Church were such violent incendiaries in many cases that he was driven to invoke the interference of the Pope to reduce them to order. ‘I doubt whether, if they were laymen, we should not have settled their cases by putting them in jail.’ To evade that alternative he wanted the Pope to ‘have the means of bringing those for whom he is responsible to fulfil the elementary duties of citizenship.’ So wrote Gladstone to Cardinal Newman on December 17, 1881. But Newman thought that the Pope had enough to do with theology without setting up as an arbiter of citizenship. It was a pity that I had not got hold of Mr. Gladstone’s appeal to the Pope during the Derry election; though, in spite of all, the Presbyterian farmers might have voted for the Pope himself if, like Mr. Solicitor-General Porter, he offered ‘honest administration of the Land Act’ at 50 per cent. reduction of rent. Still, it is pleasant to see the author of that anti-Vaticanic philippic against papal limitations of civil liberty now entreating a papal limitation of Father Murphy’s exercise of citizenship. The incident illustrates the intensity of the anxiety with which Mr. Gladstone laboured for fair play for his second Land Act, and also helps to explain the readiness with which he listened to Mr. Chamberlain’s plea for the release of Parnell in order to become head pacificator of Ireland. The chief poacher was to become head gamekeeper.

Poor Mr. Forster had some reason to complain that he had been betrayed by his ministerial colleagues. After giving him nothing but a parody of coercion which enabled him to shut suspected disturbers into State clubs, but not to punish them, they had represented to Mr. Gladstone that the resulting collapse of authority was due to the tremendous power of Mr. Parnell, who ought, accordingly, to be released in order to administer Ireland instead. There were a hundred members of Mr. Gladstone's party who had not a hair's breadth of difference between their desires and the Land League programme as regards the future of landed estate. This was really the strength of Mr. Parnell's position all through the sessions of 1881 and 1882. His best protectors were Mr. Chamberlain and the rest of the Liberal left wing. I know that Irish bishops thought Sir Charles Dilke and Mr. Chamberlain practically identical with Messrs. Davitt and Ford. When a couple of years later the two English reformers designed to make an oratorical tour in Ireland, I found no difficulty in arousing enough of episcopal suspicion to induce the illustrious strangers to abandon their intention. I thought that our home-grown revolutionists were quite sufficient for the day. In connexion with Mr. Chamberlain's patronage of the Irish members, there occurred an amusing and characteristic scene on the terrace of the House of Commons. Mr. Forster's fall was known, and everybody expected that Mr. Chamberlain would be the new Chief Secretary for Ireland, 'and under-secretary for Parnell,' as some very superficial jesters remarked. Mr. Chamberlain himself was quite sure and quite willing. One of those days I was on the terrace when my friend Richard Power, M.P. for Waterford—gay and gallant Rick Power—ran up to me: 'Come, come, O'Donnell, I can show you some fun.' I followed, and he pointed where Chamberlain was standing at the terrace wall in the closest chit-chat with one of our Irish members, notorious for his extensive knowledge of the shadiest sides of Dublin politics, and who was now evidently engaged in giving the future chief secretary



vivid sideviews on his charges of the morrow. He was excited, jovial, gesticulatory. He buttonholed the member for Birmingham. He clapped him on the shoulder. He shouted with laughter. Mr. Chamberlain seemed slightly oppressed, but felt that it was useful to know his new office by all its aspects. Suddenly Rick Power was seized with a grand idea. There was a photographer on the terrace. Hastening to the artist, Power said to him: 'You see those two gentlemen. If you take them, just when the big one is clapping the other on the shoulder, I give you a sovereign.' The man of sunlight agreed. In a few minutes he came to us to say that he had fixed a most expansive moment. A few days afterwards Rick Power showed me the photograph. It represented Chamberlain in the most familiar conversation with our rackety acquaintance. But the sketch had sadly lost its piquancy. Chamberlain had not got the post. Poor Lord Frederick Cavendish had been made Chief Secretary for Ireland, and was lying in his grave, a victim of the horrible crime in the Phoenix Park. I am inclined to think that Mr. Chamberlain would have made a great minister for Ireland; that responsibility would have showed him certain Conservative obligations; and that the Land Leaguers would have been the last to present him with a testimonial on his return to English office. But, except in a position of responsibility, he was not the man for Dublin Castle. Mr. Gladstone made one of his worst mistakes when he preferred subordination and amiability to enterprise and will.

It was Captain Gosset, the popular and politic Serjeant-at-Arms of the House, who gave me the first news, clear and definite, 'that Parnell was to be released at once, and there was a bargain in the liberation. Parnell was going to be good.' Captain Gosset had some cronies among the Irish members—'he had taken them so often into custody,' he used to say,—and though I was not a crony like Rick Power of Waterford, the Serjeant and I were very good friends. In his den, when he was off duty, there met the most brilliant men in the House at one time or another.

The Serjeant knew everything, and kept his wise, smiling mouth closely shut. 'I want to ask you, O'Donnell, do you think everything will be safe now? You boss the English Land League or something.'—'Safe? Safe? What has letting out Parnell to do with safety?' 'Well, Gladstone and Chamberlain say it's the millennium, and Russell vows it's the Second Coming.' Wherever I went, though people did not know as much as the Serjeant, there was the same expectation gone wild. 'Good Heaven!' I said to myself, 'do these people think that Parnell can turn on outrage and turn it off, and are they ready to embrace him for that!' There was one thing I knew as an absolute certainty, and that was, that the dangerous temper in Ireland did not depend now on Parnell's being in Kilmainham or in the Westminster Palace Hotel.

Serjeant Gosset, with his smiling philosophy, had hit upon a fact in surmising that the man who had undertaken to keep the English Land League legal and constitutional for the past six months must have been able to gauge the dispositions of lots of people. I had not only met Parnell on his temporary release a couple of weeks before, but our secretary was Frank Byrne, one of our organisers was John Walshe of Middlesborough, and a too frequent visitor to the offices and the public meetings of the League was Dr. Hamilton Williams, the ex-Government official who procured the amputation knives which were to be the daggers of the Phoenix Park. Of course, being a busy writer on foreign affairs, I could not constantly supervise the League offices in Palace Chambers, nor did I see any need for it. I visited the offices every day, when I was in town, and required all correspondence of importance to be brought to me. Our secretary, Frank Byrne, was the same quiet, businesslike, and respectful official which he had always been since his appointment by Mr. Butt. But between October 1881 and April 1882 an immense amount of business and correspondence had poured through the League in England, and hundreds of Irishmen of all shades of politics had visited the offices. I was in receipt

of communications from all parts of the country. The tone of exasperation at the coercion and evictions was universal. It became aggravated with menaces and longings for revenge. Byrne took on himself several times to say that the members of the League were deserting the local branches 'because the League was too constitutional.' I found Hamilton Williams coming to the offices on pretext of inquiring for somebody or something, and keeping in the offing, when not actually at the office. He was habitually using violent language, till I ordered Byrne to warn him off the premises if he did not amend. My idea was that he was an *agent provocateur*, trapping us into harbouring extreme opinions. I knew that he had been in Government employ as a medical attendant on coolies in Demarara. I had ordered Byrne to issue to all the branches of the League in England a strict warning against their countenancing the no-rent manifesto, which had been issued, as we know, by forgery and arbitrary proceeding, in the name of the Irish Land League; and I had been informed that Hamilton Williams had denounced this warning circular as 'cowardly submission to England.' In a proof of evidence which I prepared for my libel action against the *Times* I find these references to Hamilton Williams:—

The only suspicious circumstance that I noticed in the offices of the Land League of Great Britain in the year 1882 was the visits of a man named Dr. Hamilton Williams, a former Government Medical Officer in Demarara. This man on several occasions uttered violent language against the British Government of such an intemperate character that I believed it was done with the purpose of discrediting the Land League or entrapping it into an attitude which the Government could proceed against. I knew that this man came from Dungarvan, my constituency, and that his family were the chief supporters of Mr. Henry Matthews, the present Home Secretary, against my election. I believe now that Dr. Hamilton Williams was an assassination agent and procured under pretext of his medical profession the surgical knives for the Dublin assassins. No connexion whatever existed between Dr. Hamilton Williams and the Land League, and the tenor of his language was always to



discredit the employment of the parliamentary or constitutional methods. He had the effrontery to attend the meeting of the League at Clerkenwell Green and to denounce from our platform, until requested to retire, all reconciliation with the English people.

The reference to Dungarvan and the Williams family's support of Mr. Matthews, the present Lord Llandaff, relates to a curious episode which followed the Fenian trials in 1866 and 1867. A Crown lawyer, afterwards Mr. Justice Barry, who had sought to implicate the Fenians in designs of general confiscation and massacre, was subsequently a parliamentary candidate at Dungarvan. He was supported by the clergy; but the Fenian element, which was very strong, headed by Captain Williams, a most respected resident, gave their votes to Mr. Matthews, though an English Conservative, and defeated Barry. A feeling of warm friendship developed itself between the Dungarvan Fenians and the brilliant English lawyer who had served their vengeance so well, and at two subsequent elections the Williams party supported him against me; so that I had the honour of beating twice the future Home Secretary of England. Dr. Hamilton Williams, the assassination purveyor, was, I believe, nephew of the respected Captain Williams who had headed Mr. Henry Matthews's election committee. I may add that Dr. Hamilton Williams tried to obtain my confidence as 'an old opponent who now saw that Dungarvan had been right after all,' but I had been privately warned against him, for non-political reasons, by the widow of my old friend, Dr. Ward, ex-M.P. for Galway, who sank to a medical inspectorship under Government at Demarara.

As a result of all these multiplied opportunities of observation during six or seven months, in which I kept the League absolutely free from illegality—without any thanks from her Majesty's Government, of course—I was convinced that a desperate state of mind prevailed very widely; and, aided by my old knowledge of Irish secret societies, I was convinced that a special organisation was

at work which was embittering sentiment and probably or certainly preparing enormities. With this certainty in my mind, I was astounded, alarmed, and disgusted at the outburst of blind confidence which suddenly developed in ministerial circles on the eve of the return of Parnell to outdoor occupations. I was still quite certain that Parnell kept aloof from crime ; but, whether he did or not, I was certain that his release would not matter an iota to the hates and plans of men, like Hamilton Williams, who were rabid with fury against the English name. To think that Mr. Forster's life, for instance, would be safer in consequence of Mr. Parnell being restored to Mr. Gladstone's society at Westminster was in my view something more bedlamite than bedlam. ' Dancing on the crust of a volcano ' was a mild metaphor for such a proceeding. After consultation with Rick Power of Waterford—to whom I was much attached, and whose judgment I valued, though he was several years my junior, I believe—and with Baker Greene and Sheridan Knowles of the *Morning Post*, I determined again to appeal to the hospitality of the *Times* for a letter of earnest warning against the relaxation of precautions through any reliance upon personal changes or ameliorations of policy. With the utmost earnestness, with the utmost solemnity, I pleaded, in a letter dated May 3, 1882, that

time should be given for the new and better system to produce an influence on excited minds ; to remember that men who had been cast upon the roadside, or who had seen friends and neighbours cast upon the roadside, might want to feel some of the alleged benefits of the alleged amelioration. Injuries had been suffered which might leave a longing for reprisals. Let no precaution be dropped. Let greater care than ever surround every menaced life. Let no opportunity be given for crimes which might undo all the hopes of a better future.

This letter to the *Times* ought to have appeared in its issue of the 4th. It only was published on Saturday the 6th in London city ; and on Saturday the 6th in a Dublin park invaluable lives, abandoned without a single protection or precaution to every accident of hate, were slaughtered

under the precise circumstances which obedience to my solemn warning would have rendered impossible. The vice-president of the Home Rule Confederation in Great Britain had done his duty in vain, and just as my exposure of the core of the Irish difficulty in the *Times* since November of the preceding year was ignored by Mr. Gladstone for the purpose of giving the credit to his new partners, so my warning now had missed fire.

I got absolutely no thanks or recognition whatever for my attempt to keep the British Government on the path of reasonable precaution and prudence. The only recognition, in fact, was a brutal sneer from an English Conservative member of some distinction, who meaningly wanted to be informed: 'How did Mr. O'Donnell know that Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke were to be assassinated?' Those Englishmen! I felt pretty savage with the *Times* for having delayed the publication of my warning. Perhaps the leading organ was also rendered unwise and sanguine by the silly optimism which mounted mast-high in press and Parliament over the liberation of Mr. Parnell. My frequent ally, Lord Randolph Churchill, often said to me that the faith which Mr. Gladstone put in the miraculous efficacy of the Kilmainham guest's reappearance at Westminster 'was really a matter for Dr. Forbes Winslow,' a noted authority on mental affections. When I opened the *Observer* on Sunday morning, May 7, 1882, I saw that the worst which I had apprehended was done, and that the base crimes which had desolated so many Irish homes had now plunged into mourning the aristocracy of England. Poor Lord Frederick Cavendish was almost the incarnation of painstaking courtesy to friend and stranger. I knew of Mr. Burke as an exceptionally able and conscientious official. In the subsequent articles of the *Times* on Parnellism and crime, most of the facts were quite correct, but the straining after foregone conclusions made a blurred picture after all.







RIGHT HON. THOMAS HENRY BURKE,  
Of Knocknagur, Co. Galway.  
Murdered along with Lord Frederick Cavendish.

## CHAPTER XXI

### THE SESSION OF 1882—THE BLOOD ON THE TREATY— PARNELL DENOUNCES MURDER AT LAST—GLADSTONE SUPPORTS PARNELL

The Session of 1882—The Invincibles break the Bargain—Parnell, Davitt, Dillon, and McCarthy in Council—Parnell's Despair—Gladstone's Magnanimity or Calculation—Mrs. O'Shea persuades Gladstone to save Parnell—Gladstone credits Parnell with the Arrears Settlement—Another Coercion Bill gives Parnell another Opportunity—The Obstruction of Coercion effaces the Surrender in Kilmainham—Pat Ford sends Dollars and Charles Russell manages Ministerialists—'All the Bridges were cut'—Old Mr. Brady was unconvinced—Gladstone's Mistake about Parnell's 'Restraining Influence'—The Great Activity of Mr. Charles Russell, Q.C., M.P.—A Grave Condition of the British Press.

I HAVE quoted Lord Spencer's appreciation of Parnell, that he had never found that Parnell condemned crime though he believed that Parnell was really opposed to it. Lord Spencer makes a remarkable omission. Parnell did condemn crime with the utmost vigour on one occasion. He condemned with the utmost vigour the murder of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke. On that singular and unique occasion the member for Cork expressed his abhorrence of assassination. The murders of the old and the young, of men and of women, during months and years, when the fair fame of Ireland demanded a civilised exponent, had left him, grieved we presume, but ostentatiously dumb. Before a single outrage he had unveiled all the detestation in his heart, and had condemned the assassination, which had come to blast his conciliation with the Liberal Government, in the most heartfelt tones of sorrow and horror. I was present at the meeting in the Westminster Palace Hotel, along with Parnell, Davitt, Dillon, the two McCarthys—Justin and his son, Justin Huntly—at midday



of that Sunday, May 7, 1882, when we read and considered in almost speechless sorrow the accounts in the *Observer* of the tragedy at Dublin the day before. Davitt apprehended an attack by the London mob on the hotel. He accepted with gratitude from Mr. Justin H. McCarthy a revolver which the latter had brought with him. 'It might defend his life.' Parnell was almost incapable of thought. He was white and broken. 'I shall resign and quit politics for ever.' I left them within half an hour, still meditating a manifesto of sorrow and denunciation which their dazed emotion prevented them from framing in intelligible words. I had already called on Mr. Meredith Townsend of the *Spectator* to explain to him how there was always in Irish conspiracy a deeper depth, as in other countries very often. I hastened away to call on other English friends, to explain the differences between Home Rulers and Ribbonmen, and to help to prepare the journalistic commentaries of the morrow. My comrades, Baker Greene and Knowles, were silently busy in the same effort. Many English and Scots writers showed themselves gallant friends of justice to Ireland. 'This is not an Irish crime,' said more than one. Some, on the other hand, were brutal. Blows nearly fell in a couple of cases. Curious, I was always fated to pull Parnell out of holes, and to be deserted by him as soon as he found his feet. I described everywhere the miserable scene in the Westminster Palace Hotel, with Parnell white and broken with horror and despair. The knives had gone close to his heart too.

An influence of decisive importance was in the meantime acting directly upon Mr. Gladstone, an influence which, when it wins, wins overwhelmingly, at least for the time; the influence of a beautiful, weeping, and passionately devoted as well as brilliantly able woman. Mrs. O'Shea, who had already negotiated the Kilmainham treaty between the prisoner and the Premier, now invited Mr. Gladstone to see her again in this terrible hour, and, before he should form any resolution, to hear again what she had to say. Mr. Gladstone, himself also almost dazed by the calamity,

saw a ray of hope in the summons from the beautiful 'friend of Mr. Parnell,' as he called Mrs. O'Shea in the House eleven years afterwards, though without enlightening the House on the sex of the confidential 'friend,' and from her lips, from her tearful appeals, from her own high courage and exhortations not to yield to the awful blow, the Premier gathered the elements of a fresh determination to stand by the other party to the treaty. Mrs. O'Shea finally convinced Mr. Gladstone that this crime was a horror and a loathing to Parnell almost as much as to himself. She had already sent Parnell hot foot to the Westminster Palace Hotel, in spite of the rumoured mobs in the streets, to get Davitt to join in the instant issue of some fitting manifesto. The dirty mobs of traitors and fanatics who reviled her a few years later never knew what was done by the devoted woman in those tragic times.

Parnell was a helplessly and hopelessly beaten man that day. He was going to disappear without a trace beyond the bloody failure of the Land League, if he had not been saved by the genuine pity, the chivalrous generosity, and, it must be added, the mistaken statesmanship, of Mr. Gladstone. The grey Premier learned to pity the ruin of this young man, beheld his genuine grief, comforted his despair, and was taught that he was conserving a bulwark of social reconstruction and order in Ireland. Mr. Gladstone was certain in May 1882 that Parnell was the strong man of Ireland, without whom Ireland must crumble into revolutionary ruin. A few years later he was equally convinced that he ought to crush him for the general advantage, and philosophically could see him sink in a sea of troubles, heaped with the vituperations of his former creatures and loyal lieutenants. Parnell always broke in a crisis. He was imposing till the rout came. Mr. Gladstone now expected him to save Ireland for the development of the Land Act. If he lost him now, the end of the world was at hand. Mr. Gladstone knew Parnell about as well as he knew the Irish agrarian situation. So he resolved to splice the broken reed, which he took for an oak tree. We know

from Morley's 'Life' how completely Gladstone hung on Parnell's support at this moment, when Parnell was even weaker than usual. 'My opinion is,' said Mr. Gladstone to Lord Granville, 'that if Parnell goes, no restraining influence will remain; the scale of outrages will be again enlarged; and no repressive bill can avail to put it down.' I saw, most of us saw, exactly where the direction of Mr. Gladstone's mind pointed. Rick Power of Waterford openly chaffed Parnell about it. 'That is the harm of being a good citizen,' laughed Power. 'Gladstone does not care a pin about humdrum, respectable men like me and O'Donnell, but he will do anything for you, because he fears you will put dynamite in his pomatum.' The 'pomatum' was Gladstone's egg-flippy speech-lubricant. Parnell smiled sourly, and added one of his favourite aphorisms on the utter despicability of English politicians. Parnell's professional attitude with respect to English politicians was always—when Irishmen were his audience—that they gave everything to kicks and nothing to justice.

Oignez vilain, il vous poindra,  
Poignez vilain, il vous oindra.

It was only his professional attitude. He thought at least as highly of English politicians as of Irish ones. He expressed his plain sentiments to his Irish 'gutter-sparrows' when they had ceased to be pliable lieutenants.

I do not think that Mr. Gladstone found anything of this indispensability of Parnell in my letters to his son Herbert. I had advocated most strongly and earnestly the release of Parnell, and the sooner the better. I had declared to Mr. H. Gladstone—for communication to his father, of course—that I knew of my own certain knowledge that Parnell was disposed to give fair play now to the Land Act. But my plea for Parnell was part of my general plea for the ending of an exasperating coercion, that was exasperation but was certainly not coercion in any effective sense. Although the martyrdom in Kilmainham and the suppression of the Land League had immensely improved



Parnell's autocracy and temporarily silenced his worst rivals, I knew right well that Parnell's power was nothing apart from the American money; and I could have assured Mr. Gladstone—if it had been my business—that the American money was highly unlikely to be used, or to be gathered, for the purpose of Gladstonian good government in Ireland. Take Parnell out of his environment, and he was a forked radish. Meet him with Mr. Devoy at one shoulder and Mr. Ford at the other, and he was the uncrowned king of an uncounted confederation. So long as he was elevated on that monticule his crow challenged all comers. When the divorce scandal bared him of his protectors, was ever discarded figure-head more helpless? Mr. Gladstone, who, first of British politicians, was then to find out that Parnell was only *nominis umbra*—the shadow of the great name of Irish nationhood—now humbly solicited the favour of the unstable idol, whose bonzes gave him all the omnipotence he possessed. 'If Parnell goes, no restraining influence will remain!' The truth was, that Parnell, having obtained his object of provoking the guileless Forster to suppress the Land League, and feeling himself now unmenaced in his Irish leadership—leadership on condition of following New York—had no longer any quarrel with the Land Act, especially when helping the Land Act would place Mr. Gladstone's enormous influence—even though that influence was necessarily occult or quasi-occult—absolutely at his disposal in all matters of a parliamentary character. 'Governing Ireland through Mr. Parnell' was the new and interesting variant on 'governing Ireland through the bishops'; and Mr. Parnell saw no objection to the substitution, at the outset at least. When he got a Gladstonian concession, he could always whisper Mr. Pat Ford that 'it had been extorted from British fears.' Besides, the Land Act was so hopelessly unpractical, unsettling, and provocative of unrest, there was really no danger to revolutionary agitation in giving it plenty of rope.

The immediate effect of the Phoenix Park assassinations seemed to many persons of experience to be fatal

to the arrangement between Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Parnell which had been concluded under the auspices of Mr. Chamberlain, and by the intermediary of Captain and Mrs. O'Shea. Parnell himself believed that all was over. He offered his resignation to Mr. Gladstone. He was convinced that, while on the one hand British temper was likely to hunt down the murderers of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke with a vigour which had never been excited by the tragedies of a hundred Irish homes of commoner men, on the other hand his signature of any compact whatever with the Saxon had gravely compromised his purity in the eyes of his Transatlantic paymasters. Mr. John Dillon, always Mr. John Dillon, had already declared that he, Mr. John Dillon, 'knew nothing' of any compacts at Kilmainham or elsewhere. The indignant amazons of the Ladies' Land League, furious at having their bank account cut, were writing to every irreconcilable between Maine and California that 'cowardly Kitty' had kotowed to England. The autocracy, so hardly won by seven months of a martyr's condemnation to the undiluted society of the Leaguers of Kilmainham, was cracking in every joint. Mr. Gladstone came to his rescue. Within twenty-four hours after the deed in the Phoenix Park the Premier had refused Mr. Parnell's offer to resign his seat, and had sent the mourning politician the comforting assurance that 'I am deeply sensible of the honourable motives by which it has been prompted.' Two Government measures completed the contribution of the Cabinet towards the rehabilitation of the member for Cork. An Arrears Bill, placing a couple of millions at the disposal of the most distressed tenantry, convinced the Irish public that 'Parnell was thinking of the poor people when he made terms with ould Gladstone.' So the whole credit of the arrears settlement, which the *Times* and I alone had rendered possible, fell to the stipendiary of the *Irish World*! Of course, the arrears ought to have been arranged without any reference to the recluse of Kilmainham. Next, a Crimes Prevention Bill had to be introduced in hot haste in order to satisfy British opinion in face of the undiscovered

assassins. Parnell and his merry men at once flung themselves like raging heroes across the path of 'coercion.' There was obstruction naked as a berserker, and as defiant. There were suspensions in mass. There was the suspension in mass in which it pleased the ministry to include the member for Dungarvan, though absent from three-fourths of the incriminated sitting, a proceeding denounced as 'infamy' by the member, and supported with a special suspension of the member for a fortnight by the Premier. By the time that the new Coercion Bill emerged from the House of Commons the desperate patriotism of the liberated leader was again the theme of Irish and Irish-American laudation and, better still, of Irish-American cheques to the usual amount. The favour of Mr. Gladstone, impelled by paternal anxiety for his Land Act, had dowered Mr. Parnell with personal liberty, with a fresh lease of popularity and plutocracy, and with the comfortable understanding that if anything could be put in his way without injury to the Government, it would be done. I may perhaps quote here, as an illustration of the widespread and unfavourable impression throughout Europe at Mr. Gladstone's extraordinary vacillations between denunciation of and alliance with Parnellism, a letter from the Duc de Broglie on the subject. It related specifically to a subsequent alliance, that which produced Mr. Gladstone's first scheme of Home Rule; but the sentence I quote sufficiently embodies the permanent attitude of surprise and disapprobation produced by Mr. Gladstone's variations. The Duc de Broglie wrote to me, knowing that I had protested against the Gladstonian Home Rule, to express his own protest:—

Contre l'étrange et véritablement coupable conduite de Mr. Gladstone, qui, après avoir eu pour *cry electoral* pendant toute l'année passée la nécessité d'écraser le parti Parnelliste par une majorité libérale *overwhelming* (c'était son expression) s'est rallié à ce parti, et lui fait le cour, depuis qu'il a trouvé commode de s'appuyer sur lui pour rentrer au pouvoir. On ne peut trop flétrir de pareilles manœuvres, et l'ambition sénile qui les dicte: il y va de l'intégrité et de l'honneur du régime parlementaire.



The miserable associations of Parnellism and the Land League have laid a stain upon the name of Ireland which cultured Europe will not soon forget. From the cold abstractions of Grattan's Parliament and Butt's federation, Mr. Parnell had been gently and profitably borne into Mr. Pat Ford's well-lined American rocking-chair, with feet on the British Treasury bench! He had decidedly progressed since Mr. Matthew Harris had recognised the propriety of having 'a bit of a county gentleman' at the head of the insurgent peasantry of Connacht. I sent a brief note to Mr. Chinnery, the editor of the *Times*, to inquire if Mr. Gladstone had mentioned that organ 'as the source of his inspiration on the arrears.' I received within twelve hours an unsigned telegram with these words only: 'Neither of us owns the Land League vote.' If I had taught the Premier of England to understand the core of the Irish difficulty, my merit was to be my only reward. My suggestion is, that if Mr. Parnell in Kilmainham had not received early and sure information from the Premier's immediate vicinity that Mr. Gladstone was only waiting for a decent excuse to let him out if he would only promise to protect the Land Act, there never would have been any talk about the Arrears Bill at all on the Parnellite side. When my first letters appeared on the question in the *Times*, I got the reverse of support from Kilmainham; and I was plainly told from that quarter that the arrears were a complication which was most welcome, as it increased the difficulty of keeping Ireland orderly under Mr. Forster. Of course, as soon as Parnell knew that the Premier was anxious to sacrifice the guileless Forster to him, further stay in Kilmainham became as useless—the Land League being long since suppressed—as it was decidedly odious with all those Irish persons in such infernal familiarity. Now Parnell had left behind him, in the very centre of Liberal ministerialism, Mr. Charles Russell, M.P., the parliamentary counsel for the Kilmainham martyr, and that accomplished and acute ally, Mrs. Katherine O'Shea, as well as Captain O'Shea. With Mr. Chamberlain working night and day against Forster

and anxious to succeed him, there was nothing in Gladstonian intentions and requirements which did not pass rapidly into the knowledge of the parliamentary counsel and the discreet and devoted friends. 'Parnell will support the Government if the Government settles the arrears.' What a noble treaty of peace! The patriotic captive thinks of nothing but the suffering tenantry—whom his no-rent manifesto tried to drive into eviction and on the roadside by the hundred thousand when that was the game which suited the unscrupulous gamester. So Mr. Gladstone was carefully led in blinkers by trusted advisers whither it suited Parnellism to have the Premier conducted. In this toss-penny the other side of the coin turned up eight years later.

With Mr. Gladstone 'deeply sensible of his honourable motives,' with Mr. Ford deeply sensible of his unfaltering fidelity to his paymasters, with both Liberal and Nationalist touched by his desperate stand against new coercion, and with a very general feeling that the Phoenix Park assassinations were the work of men who would keep Parnell and conciliation wider than the poles apart,—it must be admitted that the member for Cork had already weathered the worst of the embarrassments which the great tragedy had imported into the execution of the treaty of Kilmainham. In fact, nothing critical or unpleasant happened to him during the rest of the session of 1882, nor before the trial of the Phoenix Park assassins and the confessions of James Carey in 1883 brought Mr. Forster back upon the war-path—to annihilate the no-rent leader, he devoutly hoped, but in reality to make his fortune. Mr. Forster, who had saved Parnell from the Land League by imprisoning him and suppressing it in 1881, was to raise him to an absolute pinnacle of wealth and popularity by his denunciations in 1883. And all the time the Irish-American machine, restored to full working order, was pumping the dollars to the tune of £150,000 a year into the absolute control of the martyr, champion, hero, irreconcilable patriot, whom Mr. Gladstone treated as his sleeping partner



in the British Government of Ireland,<sup>1</sup> and who spent every moment he could withdraw from the familiarity of his Irish colleagues—all paid £400 a year from Pat Ford—in the intimacy of a charming villa at Eltham sufficiently destitute of any Hibernian atmosphere. While the bubble lasted, it was certainly a brilliant one—if there were no objections to the materials out of which it had evolved. But the tranquillity of Ireland had gained nothing, absolutely nothing, from the appeal of the Premier to the co-operation of the prisoner. As I have often indicated, though Parnell let loose much mischief, he was quite without the influence, either moral or material, to undo the evil or even to stop it. When he had wrecked the Home Rule party, when he had broken the power and the heart of Isaac Butt, when he had proclaimed prairie value and no-rent, when he had bidden Irishmen treat their fellows as ‘lepers,’ when he had organised the social terrorism ‘even in the house of worship,’ when he had invaded constituencies and assailed colleagues with the American money, when he had taught and subsidised the doctrines of civic hate and greed,—he could obtain hundreds of thousands of followers among the needy, the slothful, the violent, the criminal. But were he to say now to his demoralised hordes, ‘Be good, for Mr. Gladstone has let me out of Kilmainham,’ why on earth should they heed him? Because he might be a Minister of the Crown next? If he was going to feather his nest, what was that to them? Even his denunciations of the Phoenix Park murders excited more sneering than admiration. It obtained no obedience whatever. Among the

<sup>1</sup> Nothing can be more delicious to the philosophic historian than the memory of Mr. Gladstone’s profound distaste for the application of the term ‘treaty’ or ‘compact’ to his arrangements with Parnell. Lord Randolph Churchill could draw him at any hour of the day by an insinuation of such a possibility. As we are candidly told in Morley’s *Life* dealing with this period, ‘Mr. Gladstone was always impatient of any reference to reciprocal assurances or tacit understandings in respect of the dealings with the prisoner in Kilmainham. *Still the nature of the proceedings was clear enough.*’ So clear that the glory of the Arrears Act fell exclusively to Mr. Parnell! The Irish popular conviction was that Gladstone had been forced to buy off Parnell’s opposition by consenting to abolish the arrears. Such was the necessary result of ‘negotiation.’



assassins themselves and among their intimates and admirers it provoked the very opposite feelings to obedience or deference. He had been tolerant of too many atrocities for his wrath at one which spoiled some of his plans to excite respect. He was fiercely denounced in some quarters, and the threats of the ultras of the knife became so violent that the Government surrounded Parnell with police protection. More than fifteen years later, standing amid a group of the extremest revolutionists of extremest Fenianism, I heard from old Mr. Brady—father of the stolid assassin Joe Brady—the bitterest complaints of Parnell and the Parnellites. 'It was they who misled my brave boy. Joe had as good a right to kill Cavendish as others to kill Lord Mountmorres. And Parnell knew well what was being done, *though all the bridges were cut that might lead up to him*. Do ye think that there could be 500 Land Leaguers in Kilmainham, with everybody free to see his friends, and not one of them to tell Parnell that brave men had their knives waiting to kill Forster and coercion?' Old Mr. Brady, who had the beautifully cut features and long beard of a Greek elder, could not be persuaded that the martyrs in Kilmainham were not conversant with at least the general design of the bands who followed 'Number One.' 'Sure, even the police knew who were doing the work, but could get no evidence against them till Carey split.' 'Where did the money come from? My Joe and his friends were poor. They could not buy things, and keep idle for months.' I said to old Mr. Brady that money could be used without Mr. Parnell knowing it. 'Of course,' he answered, 'that was the plan. There were no bridges leading to Parnell. They were kept cut. But he could make the connexions, if he liked.' It was useless to try to move the father of 'my brave boy Joe' from this position. It showed conclusively how non-existent was the moral force of Mr. Parnell's support, which had so strangely excited the enthusiastic confidence of Mr. Gladstone. Mr. Parnell might be whiter than snow; but the Invincibles, who refused to see why so much pother should be made about

one murder more than another, only saw that 'he was tryin' to get in tow with old Gladstone.'

As a mere matter of historic fact, Mr. Parnell's moral influence was found to be non-existent by the British authorities who now invoked it. The rest of the year 1882 was full of horrors. Earl Spencer, the new Viceroy of Ireland, had as grim a task as Lord Cowper during the Forster Chief Secretaryship. Even Lord Morley, in his 'Life of Gladstone,' admits that there was no visible consequence for good after his venerable chief's appeal to 'the restraining influence of Parnell.' What could be the restraining influence of the paid supporter and regular stipendiary of Pat Ford? Pat Ford 'who wanted fifty Irishmen to set fire to London in fifty places on a fine windy night'!

I once asked an Irishman of consummate experience and equitable mind (says Lord Morley), with no leanings that I know of to political nationalism, whether the task of any later ruler of Ireland was comparable to Lord Spencer's. Assuredly not, he replied. In 1882 Ireland seemed to be literally a society on the eve of dissolution. The Invincibles still roamed with knives about the streets of Dublin. Over half the country the demoralisation of every class, the terror, the fierce hatred, the universal distrust, had grown to an incredible pitch.

There was all the Gladstone Government had got for giving the credit of the Arrears Act to Mr. Restraining-Influence Parnell instead of to the man and the newspaper who really awaked the attention of England to the core of the Irish difficulty. In fact, by calling in the 'restraining influence' of Pat Ford's pensioner, in negotiating and contracting with the voluntary recluse of Kilmainham, the Gladstone Government had simply deprived the Arrears Act itself of any general effect upon the disorder in Ireland. 'Shure, it's afraid of Parnell the English Government is, bad luck to it. It's more frightenin' yet that will be good for it.' That was the Land League logic from the Gladstonian negotiation. And here let the philosophical and impartial historian protest against the slightest desire to decry the high purpose,



the more than kind-heartedness, of the Premier. In purpose and intention Mr. Gladstone

Nothing common did or mean

in the course of his long and helpless game of blindman's-buff in Irish policy, where he was invariably blindman, and where there was never any policy. Especially since he had lost faith, and most wisely lost faith, in the Forster specific—which was simply the Hicks-Beach, and Jimmy Lowther, and sempiternal Larcom-and-the-police specific—Mr. Gladstone turned more and more to the Irish counsellings of his future Attorney-General for England, the persuasive, supple, and chilled-steel Mr. Charles Russell, Q.C., M.P., the parliamentary counsel for the Land League, the candidate who, in the critical moment of his career, had been rescued from renewed defeat at Drogheda by the Parnellite vote barely two years before. Just imagine where would have been his Attorney-Generalship of England, his Chief Justiceship of England, if Mr. Charles Russell, soon to be Sir Charles Russell and Lord Russell of Killowen, had not been in the Parliament of 1880-85? Russell was a grave and lofty and commanding character; but human nature is human nature; and it was Charles Parnell who had rendered possible Charles Russell's magnificent fortune. Russell was, besides, a scion of one of those convinced and infrangible clerical Catholic families of Ireland—father, brother, and nephew of nuns and Jesuits and very rev. presidents of Maynooth—and it was simply impossible for him to regard the Irish landlords with other eyes than those of the Catholic priesthood which had fought the landlords under O'Connell, and were fighting them under Parnell and Davitt, and are fighting them under the United Irish League and the Ancient Order of Hibernians to-day. Morley's 'Life' records in that year of 1882, that 'the clergy hardly stirred a finger to restrain the wildness of the storm; some did their best to raise it. The very foundations of the social fabric were rocking.' Russell came out of the very bosom of the rockers of the social foundations. It is impossible to



censure him for innate and congenital convictions and antipathies. As his great speech in the Parnell Commission, where he was again the counsel for the Land League, shows in a hundred impressive and incisive passages, if any Irish landlords were not black, that was because they were blacker. Besides, like Charles Parnell, Charles Russell knew absolutely no Irish history, nor any other history.<sup>1</sup> He had never learned anything but law and legal practice. On Irish matters he followed the general Irish way : ' Follow your prejudices.' All through that session of 1882, and during the sessions of 1883, 1884, and 1885, the comings and goings between the Gladstonian benches and the Parnellite benches on the part of Mr. Charles Russell were habitual and perpetual. On every kind of question, in every kind of difficulty, the grave forensic skill of Mr. Russell, Q.C., set forth the case for the Parnellites with an instructive fullness and dexterity which supplied the stuff for a score of imitative orations by the Leaguers afterwards. You met Mr. Russell and Mr. Parnell in the lobbies. You met them in the corridors. You saw them consulting in the library. Mr. Gladstone had unbounded confidence and just respect for the talented Irishman whom he was to place on the road of the highest honours of bar and bench. Mr. Parnell had confidence as great, and as much respect, as that shrewd and cynical nature could have for political man. The impartial historian can be absolutely sure that the whole of the enduring alliance between the sanguine Premier and the silent agitator was favoured, counselled, cemented, and continued by the subtle care and iron will of the learned member for Dundalk. Especially after Mr. Gladstone had shown, by his omission to appoint Mr. Chamberlain to the Chief Secretaryship, that he was not disposed to afford the member for Birmingham the desired scope in Ireland, the influence of Mr. Charles Russell in Irish affairs became overwhelming. Between the member for

<sup>1</sup> In Mr. Barry O'Brien's *Life of Lord Russell of Killowen* there are very many illustrations, sometimes of marked piquancy, of the superiority to history—as the holy Roman Emperor was *super grammaticam*—possessed by the great lawyer and skilful politician.

Dundalk and the member for Cork the dominating orator of Parliaments was gently inducted into Parnellite position and attitude after Parnellite position and attitude. When the Church unsaid its blessing on Parnell, of course, Russell dropped his former patron and protégé, as lesser gentlemen-in-waiting were doing. But in 1890 the Right Hon. Sir Charles Russell had risen above the vicissitudes of politics and could remember what probably he would never have forgotten, that he was above all a son of the Church. All which may help posterity to understand why even the total failure of 'the restraining influence' of Mr. Parnell in Ireland so strangely failed to diminish his influence and credit with the head of the Government. 'He who owns the Sultan's story-teller, owns the Sultan.'

We had now come to that wearisome period of indefinite waiting for a cue and mere police government on the side of the ministry, and mere protests and denunciation on the side of the Parnellite members, which extends from the release from Kilmainham in May 1882 to the discovery of the Invincibles in the early months of 1883. The Arrears Act was passed without too much difficulty in either House, and Parnell bore with modest pride his undeserved reputation of author of the Premier's concession. The new Peace Preservation measure which necessarily followed the murders in the Phoenix Park was necessarily opposed with the uttermost resistance of the members from Ireland who maintained any sort of allegiance to the national principle. It was the sacred duty of an Irish member who did not want to forfeit all claim to popularity, to oppose to the uttermost everything which could be called coercion, however needful to the repression of crime. There was a provision in the new measure which provoked the direst resentment, namely, the power to arrest persons suspected of being capable of giving useful evidence, of interrogating them, and of detaining them in case of contumacy. We pointed out that this was simply 'evidence under torture,' as in the Middle Ages or under Nero. If a witness exercised his heaven-granted right of holding his tongue, he was to



be kept in the deepest dungeons of British bastilles, or words to that effect, until he had uttered the evidence which the cruel jailer required. It was a harrowing thought; and even the assurance that a similar provision stood in numberless codes of modern law assuaged no anxiety of our sensitive patriotism. The Bill was passed over our dead bodies, more or less, but certainly over the mutilated corpse of almost the last of the old privileges of free discussion in the House of Commons. As Mr. Dwyer Gray once told the House, 'When you have destroyed all our rights, you will be left precious few of your own.' We were avenging the closing of the Irish Parliament by the closure of the foreign usurpation. The new Act's powers of arrest, examination, and detention delivered the clumsy desperadoes of the Phoenix Park, like sheep, into the hands of the Crown prosecutors. Unaware of the facility for drawing conclusions which was afforded to the Crown by the separate mendacities of thirty ignorant fellows, untrained in the telling of just the same lie and sticking to it, the inexplicable shrewdness of the guesses made by the examining magistrates terrified the prisoners with the maddening conviction of mutual treachery; and mutual suspicion begat whines for mercy and offers of information. But this sequel belongs to the next period.

The next division of this history will go from the discovery of the Invincibles to the evolution of Gladstonian Home Rule, together with its first eclipse, followed by the suicidal intervention of the *Times* on Parnellism and crime. The history of my libel action against the *Times* forms an inseparable whole with the special Parnell Commission, and will be related with new facts and documents. The apotheosis and destruction of Parnell by Mr. Gladstone and the bishops, by the Vatican and the author of 'Vaticanism,' will be the prelude to the closer alliance, temporarily opposed by the ultra-Parnellite section, which has usually ranked the ex-Parnellites in the following of the Liberal party even unto this day.

Meantime I conclude the present chapter with two



episodes or episodic explanations: one personal to the present historian, and the other relating a fundamental condition of journalism and the journalist in British politics. The personal matter can be briefly dismissed. It is merely concerned with the caution to the indulgent reader not to assume that the manner of judging men and things in the following pages always represents the actual state of information of the writer at the moment of the happening of the events under description. On the contrary, it is my humble admission that my judgments have not been unaffected by riper knowledge and subsequent enlightenment. It does not concern the muse of history very much what I may have thought or not thought, when my information was still incomplete. It concerns that august mistress very much to have the final judgments and descriptions in conformity with the accomplished facts.

The fundamental condition of journalism and the journalist in British politics and society comes into this narrative in a very natural way. At every step and stage of my action in Parliament I found myself hampered and belittled, grudgingly recognised, often ignored, through the circumstance that I was understood to be a working journalist of the kind to which British custom had shaped the ordinary journalist; and in the eyes of the higher politicians a British journalist could not be taken seriously, or not as seriously as if he were a landowner, a manufacturer, a solicitor, or a manual workman. His opinions were understood to be on hire. His convictions were ordered by the newspaper proprietor. If you had made a substantial name as a book writer, and occupied an editorial position, you were not in fact a journalist; and your views might be worthy of consideration. Journalists themselves generally accepted this view of their utility which classed them in a semi-literary semi-servant's hall. A hundred times I have been interrupted, criticised, satirised by journalists on the general assumption that I was prepared to write against Ireland in a Unionist paper, for Ireland in a pro-Irish paper, and agreeably to box the compass of indecision

in a paper which had not made up its mind. Slipperiness and venality on the part of a journalist who happened to be in politics was often condoned with a knowing smile or an indulgent gesture. The journalist was an appendage of the business and the business belonged to the tradesman. Trade being respectable and solid, the tradesman might aspire to all the prizes open to successful commerce in a country of commercial persons. If his newspaper business had been distinguished for a long period by a succession of solid or brilliant articles which helped one political party or which hurt the other political party, the accolade of knighthood, the half-nobility of the baronetage, the purple of the peerage might reward . . . the tradesman. Not the writer. The writer was only the assistant behind the tradesman's counter. The editor was a shopwalker keeping the assistants to their employment. A very superior shopwalker might be asked to dine with the family, the tradesman's family.

It happened that I, being an expert in foreign affairs, never touching home politics except when I could express my own convictions, and being placed by private circumstances entirely beyond the baser conditions of employment for cash, was always and invariably master of myself and my opinions. 'I wrote what I pleased, and the tradesman's shopwalkers published what they pleased.' They were usually more than pleased to publish everything that was written by a man who had always good information, often special information, and always a body of private correspondents in three of the great capitals of Europe. As I happened to detest Russian policy, as became a sworn servant of Poland and the White Eagle, it pleased both me and the *Morning Post* to criticise the advance of Russia in the least sympathetic spirit. I wrote fact articles. The information was their special feature. In every paper with which I had the pleasure to be connected, my rule was the same. If you wanted an article on the position of the restored Bourbons in Spain, you got it. You got it as it actually was. If you liked to adulterate the descrip-



tion, that was your affair ; but you must do the adulteration yourself, by the usual hacks of the shop. I was paid for what I wrote, not for what you printed ; and you almost invariably were very glad to print what I wrote as I wrote it. If I wrote on 'Bismarck in his War Laboratory' for the *Spectator*, I gave facts which could not be got from any other foreign expert in England. When I wrote on 'The Anti-clericalism of Gambetta' for the *Tablet*, my facts could be coloured with the opinions of the *Tablet*, because nobody wrote on the *Tablet* who did not believe on such matters as George Elliot Ranken, most courteous and scholarly of editors, also believed. When I wrote on Irish affairs, it was in the *Contemporary* or some similar review, with my signature under the article. But even my position as an expert writer was very generally ignored. I was often insulted, mostly by Tories, with writing for 'the *Morning Post*,' the implication being that I was a venal hack, even as other British journalists in the prevalent view of British opinion. We were all paid assistants behind the counter of a capitalist. I remember being complimented several times, by the late Lord Salisbury, on my articles concerning Eastern affairs between 1875 and 1880—he, like a few others, being behind the scenes—and once I replied, to his vast amusement, 'Yes, yes, I suppose I shall make Borthwick a baronet some day.' The semi-journalist in the Marquis laughed, and laughed with genial merriment ; and then, more gravely, Lord Salisbury added : 'That is a sad blot on our British press. The writer gets nothing but pay, such as it may be. And taking England as England is, I do not see how we can better it.' It was possibly because Lord Salisbury saw the rottenness of the system that he opposed so long and stout a resistance to the Queen's desire to make the owner of the *Morning Post* a peer of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland ! 'How much does Borthwick pay you ?'—'Only two guineas an article, and I find my own needles and thread.' 'You mean your information. The *Post* has no foreign correspondents ?'—'None, my lord, but I have my own, and



I write fact articles ; and I pretend that the *Post* could not get the same news for ten times the money. Irish brains are cheap in England.' ' I am really sorry, Mr. O'Donnell.' ' Well, my Lord, until Ireland is a nation, I suppose Irishmen will be cheated.' ' Now we cannot have Home Rule even to get justice for journalists. Besides, English writers get no more credit than you.'

I am quite certain that in mentioning the frequent part which my colleagues, Messrs. Baker Greene and Sheridan Knowles, took in the Irish parliamentary politics of those years, I appear to most readers to import an element beneath the dignity of British history. In France, we three would occupy some position in the public eye, like M. John Lemoinne and M. François Charmes of the *Débats* and M. Judet of the *Éclair*. Mr. Knowles wrote a coldly accurate style, full of the profoundest knowledge of Parliament for a quarter of a century. Baker Greene had more colour and force than Sheridan Knowles, and positively immense European knowledge. Nobody ever heard of them in England. They were paid miserably. Their newspaper had risen to the Upper House! They may have professed to feel themselves elevated . . . vicariously. Not that Mr. Borthwick was anything but a courteous and charming employer. It never occurred to him, probably, that newspaper employers who get honours and fortunes through the brainwork of half a dozen writers owe a good deal more to those writers than wages. When the universal custom of Britain already rewards the employer and ignores the intelligence, it hardly required the erection of vast syndicates to direct and extend the output of news and comments, on a plan that leaves no essential difference between a factory of journals and a factory of cocoa or marmalade. The only thing which can keep modern party government within the bounds of decency and the hope of utility is a press which is free because the tradesman keeps to his cash account, and which is responsible because the public knows and honours the man with the pen. One of the

reasons why the leading journal obtained a peculiar ascendancy in the world of thought, was that rumour said a man on the *Times* need never know that a proprietor existed. Probably that was an exaggeration. No writer can ever obtain the rights due to his culture and skill unless his name can share the influence which his work confers upon the paper. There is little of Milton's praise of unlicensed printing about a press which is a capitalist concern for the control and working of public information and opinion. That way social ruin lies, with political ruin hard by. Is it not more than droll that a writer—whose careful intellect, exercised on admirable information, has equipped the party leaders for twenty years with the substance and the guidance of their function—may not be differentiated by them from the fire and accident reporter, and will end his days, when quite worn out, without a penny beyond his savings, while his disciples and his tradesmen have mounted to coronets and perhaps to millions? The material element in the British press wields a power and enjoys an affluence that may be truly called colossal; its intellectual element is condemned to an insignificance and dependence which seem to be confined to the daughter-communities of the British parent, but which, even among them, hardly anywhere quite sink to the parental level. I have known the social ambitions of a single and uncultured member of a proprietorial family alter the entire value and direction of an editorial tradition of quarter of a century. This was not the least of the obstacles between Ireland and justice, and continues to be perhaps the insurmountable obstacle to the Empire becoming imperial.

## CHAPTER XXII

THE SESSIONS OF 1883, 1884, AND 1885—MRS. O'SHEA  
SUPPORTS GLADSTONE—GLADSTONE'S RISING INFLUENCE  
AND PARNELL'S SINKING HEALTH AND POWER—THE  
END OF ELECTORAL FREEDOM

Land Act checks neither Emigration nor Crime—Undercultivation and Dismissal of Labour—Eltham supports Gladstone—Mrs. O'Shea and Parnellites—Trial of Invincibles—Forster attacks and enriches Parnell—Conciliating Gladstone and Ford—Secretary of State Bill—Parnell's Party getting Gladstonised—Migration Sham—Secondary Education Destruction—Ruinous Effects of Electoral Laws of 1884-5—Parnell eclipsed by the Lieutenants—The Galway Election Mutiny—Parnell's Failing Health—His Contempt for His Followers.

THE utter futility of Mr. Gladstone's fancy, carefully encouraged by Mr. Joseph Chamberlain and Mr. Charles Russell, that 'Parnell, and Parnell alone, can keep Ireland quiet,' was not demonstrated merely by the isolated crime in the Phoenix Park. All Ireland was a welter of disorder and intimidation, avowed discontent and blind emigration. The combined blessings of the Land League, the Land Act, and the Arrears Act only conducted yearly 50,000 Irish emigrants to the ports of embarkation. Within five years from the triumph of the New Departure, quarter of a million of men and women had fled from the fortunate country which enjoyed so many benedictions of agitation and legislation. Not a few of the payments under the Arrears Act served to facilitate the passage to America. The crowning effort of Irish patriotism continued to apply itself to getting out of Ireland. The promise of further revisions of rent contained in the new Land Act to everybody who showed his inability to exhibit a cultivated farm naturally led to the diminution of cultivation; and



the labour of the labourer becoming superfluous under a deliberate system of undercropping and undersowing, the emancipated tenants gave notice to quit to their farm hands and looked to the Land Courts to take pity upon a soil which must be over-rented because it was over-weedy and over-neglected. Associations of desperate out-of-works aggravated the public peril of the tenant confederacies. The outburst of crime provoked the attempted repression of crime. This was the reign of the Red Earl, as the pens of Mr. William O'Brien and his writers, in the organ of dissension called *United Ireland*, designated the firm and kindly Viceroy, Lord Spencer; originally from his rufous beard of a viking, but thence by easy transitions in allusion to the sanguinary tastes of a tyrant delighting in scaffolds and fusiladings, the knout, the strappado, and all the other horrors of a Leaguer's imagination on a League mission.

It has escaped the eye, or has been omitted from the recollection, of Parnellite chroniclers and quasi-biographers that Parnell kept endeavouring to prove his fidelity to his obligations to Mr. Gladstone in the compact of Kilmainham, and that the villa at Eltham played its part in retaining the weary or wary chief at a sober distance from the passionate gesticulations and orations of the unconciliated Parnellites. The villa at Eltham played a tactical as well as a reposeful part in this stage of the waiting game of Mr. Parnell. While he waited, he enjoyed, far from the stridor of death-on-the-flure debates, the brilliant conversation of Captain O'Shea, one of the brightest of diners-out, and the not inferior charm of the society of Captain O'Shea's beautiful, accomplished, and politic wife. Often when the fieriest spirits of the party looked for the indomitable leader to point their furious phrases with his chilly defiance of the Saxon, the indomitable leader had stolen away. I have the most vivid recollection of a scene in the Ladies' Gallery and subsequently in one of the corridors of the House. I had obtained places in the gallery for the wife and sister of an English acquaintance, and had gone up to inquire after the comfort of my charges. While I was

conversing, the door opened quietly, and Parnell entered also, directing his looks to a lady in the front row. She appeared to expect him, for she rose as soon as he made his appearance. It was Mrs. O'Shea. The pair retired and did not return. I asked my old friend, the messenger in charge of the gallery, if they were gone down to the lobby. 'They went down the stairs to the lady's brougham and drove away.' The messenger added discreetly, 'Mrs. O'Shea often takes him away. He must be tired of the debates sometimes.' As I returned to the House I met a group in the corridor leading to the library, consisting of four Parnellite members, and the daughter of one of them. 'You will not see your chief this afternoon,' I said jestingly. 'He has just left the Ladies' Gallery with a charming lady.' They all exclaimed unanimously: 'Of course, it is Mrs. O'Shea.' At this very moment Captain O'Shea hurried towards our group. 'I say, have any of you seen Parnell? I am looking for him everywhere.' One after another, the four Parnellites assured Captain O'Shea that 'they had not seen Parnell for quite a time.' I, who had the latest news, said nothing, and escaped the Captain's notice. 'I want to see Parnell badly,' cried Captain O'Shea, as he walked away to continue his futile search; and the six of us exchanged a social smile. It was a more romantic way of playing the waiting game than listening to the Dublin Ciceronianisms of Mr. Sexton or even the dulcet brogue of Mr. T. P. O'Connor. There is no doubt that Mr. Gladstone remarked and approved Parnell's conspicuous abstention from as many occasions of superheated declamation as he could possibly avoid; and the fact did not diminish the Premier's goodwill towards the man who was keeping his parole. Six years afterwards, the invention of the Non-conformist conscience had rendered political morality less tolerant than in 1883. Of course, the question was not ignored among some of us, whether the Liberal Premier was aware of the particular character of Parnell's sudden and prolonged taste for seclusion and mystery. I think that all the Irish members, at any rate, who were accustomed



to enter London society, had no doubt whatever on the subject. 'Believe me,' said one of the wittiest and most charming of good fellows, 'there is not a morning that old Gladstone does not get before his breakfast a report of the hour at which Parnell went to Eltham, and whether he came back in the brougham or walked to the station.' It certainly seems difficult to suppose that the head of the Government was the only man in the best-informed circles of London who did not know that Mrs. O'Shea's domination of Parnell's non-political existence, at any rate, was absolute and unlimited; that the confidence of Captain O'Shea was as hospitable as ever; that Captain O'Shea, engrossed by a hundred social engagements, used even to ask Parnell to take Mrs. O'Shea to the theatre and similar amusements; and that—without any inquiry into the possible results of close companionship between two young people, handsome, attached, and uncontrolled—the monopoly of Parnell's spare time, and a good deal more than his spare time, by a woman, fascinating, clever, at least most friendly, and absolutely unpatriotic in any Irish sense, was a phenomenon which had been invariably attended, in all history, by the mastery of the weaker vessel, as the masterful element is designated in these cases. At all events, Mr. Gladstone knew that Parnell was mysteriously absent from the House for prolonged periods and in spite of the entreaties of followers who were afraid to criticise. In a letter already written by Mr. Gladstone to Lord Hartington four years before the divorce exposures, on December 17, 1885—Morley's 'Life,' ii. 377—it is quite clear that the Liberal Premier was perfectly acquainted with Parnell's habits of mysterious seclusion. Referring to the intolerable pressure of public affairs, he wrote: 'The whole stream of public excitement is now turned upon me, and I am pestered with incessant telegrams which I have no defence against, but either suicide or Parnell's method of self-concealment.' Is it possible, credible, or conceivable that the head of the Government had never learned, even from the authorities of Scotland Yard while engaged in protecting



Parnell from Invincible resentment, where and why Parnell was enabled to combine 'self-concealment' with the cultivation of a most devoted attachment? Of course, it was not the business of Mr. Gladstone to interfere or to interpret. The smiling gossips in the corridor of the House, when O'Shea was hunting for the gentleman who had left the Ladies' Gallery a few minutes before—three of these complacent gossips being afterwards fierce and avenging moralists after Maynooth had spoken—together with the indulgent Premier, who could jest so agreeably with Lord Hartington on Parnell's 'method of self-concealment'—all form a curious tableau in comparison with the tremendous hue-and-cry which was so soon to wreck Parnell and his party. Mr. Gladstone was a man of high principles, but he was no Quixotic ascetic in politics, unless more than moral perfections were involved. From April and May 1882 Gladstone had known that Mrs. O'Shea was Parnell's dearest friend, the ambassadress with whom the Premier had arranged the Kilmainham treaty. This must not be forgotten.

Into the midst of this situation came the discovery of the Invincibles, shortly after the opening of the session of 1883. It is unnecessary to detail the matter. Tentative arrests and separate cross-examinations had driven some thirty notorious extremists into such an uncomfortable frame of suspicion of traitors among themselves, that the government of Lord Spencer soon had a choice of informers among the most deeply implicated of the band. James Carey, a member of the Dublin corporation and quite a respectable man in his way, ostentatiously patriotic and devout, was accepted by the Crown as chief witness in consequence of his leading position as organiser of the crimes. His evidence put the rope round the necks of the actual murderers of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke, but gave no indication beyond. It has become well known that Carey only confessed the inevitable, and accused nobody who was not fairly sure of being hanged anyhow. There was not the remotest ground for the barest suspicion against Parnell; and the original inopportuneness of that murder

from the Parnellite standpoint, just at the moment when Gladstone had practically called Parnell to the co-administration of Ireland, remained and confirmed the judgment of all men of sense. But Mr. Forster, who had sat nursing his sore head ever since Chamberlain and Russell had ensured his fall from office the previous year, now seized the occasion of the renewed excitement in the public mind in order to make an elaborate and powerful attack upon the connexion between Land League activity and the commission of outrage. It was bad hearing for any Irishman who loved Ireland, and Mr. Forster might have made a lasting impression if he had controlled his animosity. His provocative tone, his insults which went far beyond their target, excited non-Parnellists like myself even more than the most active members of the League. Parnell elected not to reply on the spot, which was both natural and just, though the whole coalition that hated Irish nationality root and branch pretended to think that he should have answered, without a moment's consideration or consultation of evidence, a harangue which must have taken Mr. Forster days to elaborate. I have always made it a solemn duty to hit any man who hits the Irish cause, and it appeared to me that I knew the way to deal with Mr. Forster. I sought out Parnell in order to render to him the last service which his old comrade and instructor was ever to pay within that Parliament or elsewhere. But that was entirely his fault—which is another story.

I found Parnell in the library of the House, with a pile of papers like notes of speeches before him. He cried out with something of the old comradeship, 'O'Donnell, I want you. Sexton and Healy have given me a lot of splendid facts for my reply to Forster, but I do not feel quite that they fit. My speech will be rather heavy, I fear. What a tremendous lot of ground Forster went over. He must have had that speech on the stocks ever since he went out of office.' I pulled over a chair and sat down by him. 'Do you know, Parnell, my idea? I am blest if I would answer Forster at all.'—'But I open the debate to-morrow?' 'Open it by

all means. But how? You are the head of the Irish nation . . . unfortunately?' Parnell laughed gently. He knew my disapproval of nearly everything he had done for four years. 'Yes, you are the head of the Irish nation, and this Englishman has the impudence to stand you up for the decision of English opinion. If I were you, I should tell them all to go to the devil. You are responsible to Ireland alone. *Parnell, give them contempt, nothing but contempt, and Ireland will go wild with pride for you.*' Parnell leaned back in his chair for two seconds, and then, with a sort of shout, cried, 'O'Donnell the Audacious! By God, you are right,' and pushed the whole pile of notes off the table on to the floor. 'Let us come down on the terrace. I shan't think of my reply till to-morrow.' As we went out the door, he half turned to look at the heap on the carpet, and with a chuckle that had something grim in it, said: 'Those were great notes of Sexton's.' Next day, as we know, Parnell scornfully declined to make any justification for anything he had ever done to any authority but the Irish nation.

Parnell's scornful defiance of English opinion roused most of England to angry protest, but it made Ireland almost wild with joy. The most popular prelate in the country, Archbishop Croke of Cashel and Emly, wrote a letter in the *Freeman's Journal*, supporting a national testimonial to the Irish leader who owned no earthly judge but Ireland. Within a couple of months the Parnell testimonial had reached some £40,000. Mr. Forster's indictment had made Mr. Parnell's fortune. For some weeks after this incident Parnell, as regarded personal relations apart from politics, was almost to me the Parnell of 1876 and 1877. He came one afternoon to find me in my rooms as of old in Serjeants' Inn, and we walked and sat together in the Embankment Gardens. We got talking on his sister, Fanny Parnell, who had died a few months before. He was very, very fond of her. I recalled to him how I had seen her in her glory of youth and beauty when she was the *Belle Américaine* of Paris, with hearts under her



feet wherever she went. I told him I had marked her in the Ladies' Gallery during the twenty-six hours' sitting in 1877, as she sat through the watches of the night. I swear I saw big tears in Parnell's eyes, for this man of narrow ambition and callous politics had a heart of uttermost loyalty and tenderness where he loved. Years afterwards, had Parnell been less loyal to lawless love, Captain O'Shea would never have got his divorce, nor would Maynooth have got its victory. Nothing had been proved which could not be fairly explained by the more than brother-and-sister intimacy of years which had existed with both the O'Sheas. A couple of pieces of dubious testimony could be crushed. It was then that Katherine O'Shea said to Parnell, 'If you win the case, I must be that man's wife until I die, and may death not be long!' Parnell turned to his triumphant solicitor, already sure of exculpating so famous a client, and simply said: 'We make no defence.' Then all the curs who had fed at his hands yapped and bit in packs, and virtuous Ireland stoned the idol before whom she had grovelled. Sometimes the impulses of honour may stand higher than the professions of sanctity. Parnell's self-conceit had anyhow grown so enormous that he never contemplated the bare possibility of a revolt or deposition.

Mr. Forster's indictment did no more than the tragedy in the Phoenix Park to shake Gladstone's resolution to keep Parnell as the sheet-anchor of his Irish administration. The ex-Chief Secretary had merely confirmed and increased Parnell's ascendancy. Certainly he was the most useful man for Parnell whom Parnell had ever met. First he suppressed the Land League and imprisoned Parnell, exactly when these courses were absolutely necessary to the latter's plans; and now he had made an intemperate attack, and provoked a haughty retort, which set the Irish frantic with enthusiasm from one side of the world to the other. The play which henceforth went on in the House was quite a three-handed affair. There was Mr. Gladstone waiting till some necessity of the situation arose which would make the Liberal party able and disposed to accept what Parnell

would be very glad to get. There was Parnell occasionally expressing himself in terms of violent cynicism on the readiness of all English statesmen to sacrifice their convictions to expediency, but all the while planning how he would reconcile his American paymasters to the arrangement which he was anxious to make, provided only that Mr. Gladstone would gild the pill sufficiently. Thirdly, there was the Parnellite party, growing in veneration for the Liberal Premier, but acutely conscious that a premature hint of conciliation might cast them dollarless upon the hard pavement of Sackville Street, if only Mr. Patrick Ford and Company—a Mr. Finnerty of Chicago was looming large on the financial horizon at the time—were to cry out: ‘Treason to Ireland! Not another cent to the Parliamentarians!’ That would be a new departure to be avoided by every manœuvre of angry debate and every extremity of death—on the flure of the House.

I have no intention of repeating in detail the monotonous heroics of Dillon, O’Brien, Sexton, T. P. O’Connor, Healy, and the rest of the earnest and fluent confederacy. Most of them were quite honest in their histrionics. Probably they were genuinely attracted by the consciousness that the *Freeman’s Journal* was reproducing at length their lofty sentiments and lengthy discourses for the applauses of the Irish race at home and abroad. The *Freeman’s Journal* had been thoroughly tamed at an early date in the development of Parnellism. It seldom dared now to applaud a moderate protest, and hastened to devote its double-leaded type to the exaltation of every man whom the League delighted to honour. As its proprietor, Mr. Edmund Dwyer Gray, related to me with reluctant resignation, Davitt had warned him that if the *Freeman’s Journal* did not come into line with the organs of the League, ‘he would have the *Freeman* burned on the same Sunday afternoon on a hundred platforms throughout Ireland, and start on the Monday a new daily paper with the American money.’ If anybody or anything showed signs of comparative sanity, *United Ireland*, under the spirited editorship of



Mr. William O'Brien, was ready to apply the requisite ginger in the largest available doses. But I, who was behind the scenes of most things, knew that the whole party was getting thoroughly Gladstonised, with various gradations and variations, from the sly and silent Parnell to the explosive Healy and the genuinely Radical T. P. O'Connor. There was plenty of ferocious denunciation on every reasonable excuse. The constant conflicts between the police and magistrates on the one hand, and the gangs of moonlighters and cowtailers on the other, gave endless opportunity for debates on the Red Earl's viceroyalty, which Mr. O'Brien maintained was far out-heroding the buckshot days of Mr. Forster. The Irish police, as the semi-soldiers of the constabulary were facetiously designated, were perfectly inefficient for the prevention of crime, but they showed natural temper in the course of the endless fatigues of their endless campaign against intimidators; and magisterial justice often looked like magisterial wrath. So really the American contributors were getting very fair value for their dollars, both in the savage agitation throughout the country and in the patriotic thunders in the House. Take it as you will, it was a disgusting upshot after nearly a century of the Act of Union; and if Mr. Gladstone saw dimly his way to an alteration which could not, he thought, be a worsening of such a situation, there were plenty of indications that the party of order which followed Lord Salisbury was nearly as disgusted and even more embarrassed.

The growing intimacy between the Liberal Ministry and the nominal irreconcilables of Parnellism was sufficiently illustrated in one matchless and inimitable message sent by Mr. Parnell to a grand convention of the whole force of the Ford-Devoy-Davitt-Finnerty parties in America. Excusing himself for non-attendance at their august assembly by the constant necessity of being in person at Westminster . . . or Eltham, the diplomatic chief went on to urge upon the brotherhoods the absolute expediency of drawing up the programme and the resolutions of their conventions



'in terms which would allow the Parliamentary party to continue to accept the financial help of the Irish in America.' There was dynamite talk, and dynamite plots. The *Irish World* was descending habitually to even lower depths of idiotic ruffianism and diabolical insanity than it had previously reached. 'But, please, do not put that in your agenda of the convention, or we may be embarrassed about taking your money which we so much appreciate.' I forget what nitric-compound casuistry met the emergency. At any rate, the supplies were neither cut off nor declined. The broadest possible hint of the readiness of the Parnellites to accept an arrangement with the British Government, if the thing could be suitably managed, was, however, given in a Bill brought in by the vice-chairman of the party, Mr. Justin McCarthy, on April 17, 1883, and moved by him for second reading, in which it was proposed by this 'Home Rule Party' to substitute for the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland 'an additional Secretary of State, who is to be a member of the House of Commons, *elected by an Irish constituency*, and sitting and voting as member for such constituency in the said House.' As for the office of Lieutenant-General and General-Governor of Ireland, it was to be 'abolished from and after the first day of January one thousand eight hundred and eighty-four.' Among the backers of the Bill was Mr. J. J. O'Kelly, M.P., that ultra-extremist follower of Mr. Parnell who had consented to come from the representation of the *New York Herald* at Cuba to the British House of Commons in order to express his inflexible defiance of the Saxon and Saxondom. Mr. William O'Brien, M.P., warmly supported the proposed unification of Irish administration in London, and the question arose in some of our minds whether he or Parnell was offering himself to be the new Secretary of State for Ireland, 'elected by an Irish constituency,' and sitting and voting at Westminster. Mr. Dwyer Gray and some others indignantly condemned the treacherous proposal, which simply abolished the last shred of the separate recognition of Ireland which still existed in English law. As for myself,

the thing finally filled the cup. Asking who was going to be the new Unionist Secretary for Ireland, I announced my intention of cutting my connexion with such a party, and I resigned on the spot, never again to return. All the revolutionism and outrage and bragging of recent years were now quite certain, it appeared to me, to end, if no accident supervened, in Gladstonian Home Rule and Mr. Charles Stewart Parnell as sub-Governor of the Irish Colony under the British Crown. Any student of history who wants to verify his references will find the proposal of Messrs. McCarthy, O'Kelly, and O'Brien as Bill thirty-seven of the forty-sixth year of Queen Victoria. Mr. Gladstone could now understand clearly enough that the Parnellites were not quite so terrible as they had looked, and he was naturally fortified in the wisdom of backing Parnell as the hope of the Government. Meantime the Irish News Agency was instructed to suppress all notice of the matter in the communications to the affiliated press in America and Australia. That 'Secretary of State for Ireland, elected by an Irish constituency' might be too much for the sympathetic Finnerty and the long-suffering Devoy. It is very probable that down to the present hour there is not an Irish American in existence who has ever learned that, within twelve months from the Kilmainham compact, a Bill for establishing an Irish secretariate of state at London, instead of the viceroyalty abolished in Ireland, was backed in the British House of Commons by the vice-chairman of the Parnellite party assisted by Messrs. O'Brien and O'Kelly.

As might be expected, the formal resignation from the Parliamentary party of a member who had my record, from the day ten years before when I had proposed the active policy in the Home Rule Conference of 1873, was received with considerable comment, so far as it was allowed to be known. For weeks I received letters of protest and inquiry from all parts of Ireland. The executive of the Irish electoral organisation in Britain which was formerly the Home Rule Confederation, and then took the names successively of Land League and National League with the



changing fashions of nomenclature in Dublin, resented very strongly what had occurred. A formal resolution asking me to reconsider my resignation was presented to me, with an urgent request to remain with the party. It was this attitude of the organisation in Great Britain which, probably more than anything else, made Parnell seek me out with a view to obtaining the withdrawal of my resignation. We had a couple of long conversations, in which Parnell opened by strongly repudiating my view that he and his party were veering to Liberalism under Gladstone. 'Never have I thought of such a step,' said Parnell emphatically. 'Gladstone may come to us, but not we to Gladstone. We accept his measures if they are good for Ireland, but we are as free to accept aid from Lord Salisbury as from him.' Parnell was so entrenched and fortified in his own self-conceit that he had no doubt that it was Gladstone who would be always dancing to his tune. I replied that, without going into the question of inclinations or intentions, the facts showed that the leading members of the party were already Gladstonian to their finger-tips, that Justin McCarthy, T. P. O'Connor, and Healy thought Gladstonese even when they talked the conventional language of Irish parliamentary patriotism. Parnell spoke of being impartial between Liberals and Tories. He had already admitted principles and occupied positions which were absolutely incompatible with any working agreement with the Conservative party for anything more durable than a snap division. 'The servile war which you kindled in Ireland makes Conservative Home Rule an impossibility, and I warn you that to-morrow, if many of your men had to choose between Gladstone and you, it is not you whom they might follow. The attractions of the Land League are pretty stale. The Irish farmers look to Gladstone to give them the rest of the Irish land.' Coming to a more personal note: 'You have deserted me, your oldest comrade. Mark my words, you will be deserted in your turn.' These words were literally said as they stand. Parnell left me with genuine regret at the last moment. He intimated again that he was playing Gladstone. When he had landed



him, there would still be as good fish in the sea as ever was caught. Parnell was always open to consider the expediency of throwing over the ally of the moment for an ally of to-morrow. He forgot that a man who plays that sort of game cannot afford to make mistakes. He imagined that it was he who had won the success in Ireland. His vanity did not let him see that it was the American money. But the American money could offer no inducements equivalent to what a British Premier might agree to exhibit. After all, the American money was only about £100,000 a year. Gladstonian Home Rule might present the patriots with the hope of disposing of Irish estimates to the amount of many millions sterling a year. We shall shortly see that, placed between Gladstone and Parnell, the whole troop of the Land League livery—J. Dillon, W. O'Brien, T. P. O'Connor, Justin McCarthy, T. M. Healy, Michael Davitt—headed straight for the Liberal lobby. Let us fairly admit that they thought that benefit for Ireland, as they understood it, lay that way. When I come to ask the reader behind the scenes of the divorce pretext, I shall have something special to relate on Parnell's increasing suspicions of Gladstone's game, of his intention to replace his most treacherous followers with new men, and, especially, of Mrs. O'Shea's growing fears that Mr. Gladstone was not remaining quite what the ambassadress had expected, but was, as regarded Parnell, keeping the treaty more to the letter than to the spirit. Perhaps Mr. Gladstone also felt entitled to his own interpretation. The case is not new to diplomats. Interpretation has wrecked other compacts than the agreement between William E. Gladstone and Katherine O'Shea.

Certainly the Gladstonian Home Rulers who still called themselves Parnellites, including Parnell himself, had many reasons to pin their faith to the policy of the Liberal Premier. A series of amendments of the Land Act, suggested by the Irishmen, successively included in the scope of the Act almost everything and everybody which had been omitted, while Mr. Gladstone was maintaining his first manner, that

Irish landlordism was really very just on the whole, but required some improvement in details. Now it was 'Vote for Gladstone and Fair Rents'; and even the tenant of what might be a market garden, if it were a garden at all, was to be entitled to revise his bargain under the auspices of Government judges. Lord Salisbury, after a decent interval, was to adopt the same attitude of resignation brightened by hope. The Tories were still to veil a while longer their thankless contempt for their Irish garrison who had failed to achieve the impossible task of being at once friends of the foreigner and popular with their own countrymen, but the Liberals adopted Mr. Davitt's views with startling facility. There is a human document of the first importance which reveals exactly the feelings which had taken the place of the old regard for the Irish gentry in the higher circles of the Liberal party. In Morley's 'Life of Gladstone' at this period, we have the testimony of one who lived very near to the rose, and his testimony betrays an incredible pitch of misapprehension and prejudice as relates to the wretched gentry of Ireland. 'Who but the Irish loyalists had held Ireland in the hollow of their hands for generation upon generation, and who but they were answerable for the odious and dishonouring failure, so patent before all the world, to effect a true incorporation of their country in a united realm?' As if the fundamental cause of the failure of the poor devils to win any popularity in their own country was not precisely their effort 'to effect its incorporation in the United Kingdom,' instead of maintaining its separate nationhood as the realm of Ireland. And they alone were answerable? Their critic had never heard of the Act which disfranchised the whole of their lesser tenantry who were their habitual followers, nor of the Act which had sold up thousands of them in the Encumbered Estates Court for having shared the losses of their poor countrymen in the Black Famine, nor of the Act which had let in the free trade of the whole foreign world to swamp their profits and to defertilise their acres along with the acres of their tenant husbandmen. Lord Morley is one of the highest



possible specimens of the Liberal moraliser on Ireland, and his views, surprisingly akin to the utterances of Mr. Devoy and Mr. Finnerty, represented not only Mr. Gladstone's awakened intelligence, but the views of the Dilkes, Laboucheres, Russells, Chamberlains, and the rest of the Liberal left wing who were Mr. Parnell's best allies. It was high time for me to seek more congenial climes than the lobbies where these flowers of legislation bloomed.

Three measures which prepared the way for Gladstonian Home Rule and recreated the ascendancy of Parnell—under a Gladstonian lease, that is to say—were the migration clause, the secondary schools grant, and the new Franchise Act. The migration clause was intended to play the old game of the Arrears Act in getting popular credit for Parnell as having ' wrung ' or ' forced ' the alien government to remedy a wrong of Ireland. The secondary schools measure was meant both to confirm the idea of Parnell's influence over the Government, and also to restore the friendly relations between Mr. Gladstone and the Irish clergy which had been shattered or impaired by the unsuccessful University Bill of 1873 and by the fiery pamphlet against Vaticanism. The extension of the franchise was carried out on lines admirably unsuited for Irish interests, but temporarily adapted to place the representation in the hands of Parnell and at the mercy of the American money. The three measures made Parnellism omnipotent at the next general election, but they also created a situation which brought the Catholic clergy and the Liberal Premier into relations of friendliness and which wondrously facilitated Parnell's catastrophe under the united hostility of the Premier and the clergy.

The story of the migration clause was simple and unedifying. In the month of April Mr. O'Connor Power, M.P. for Mayo, brought in a Bill for facilitating the migration of families from congested districts, to use the phrase in current use, to districts where they could be helped to larger holdings and better conditions of life. The Gladstone Government was firm on the utter futility of such a



step ; and though Mr. O'Connor Power was the representative of a congested county, his Bill was rejected without more ado. A couple of months afterwards, it occurred to Mr. Chamberlain, it was said, that migration was a useful or at least a popular idea, which might do good both to the Government and Mr. Parnell. The member for Cork was approached, accordingly, and asked on the part of the Government if he would give his support, both personally and together with his party, in case the Government proposed to give a sum of money, by way of experiment, for the purpose of buying estates to be settled with the surplus families from one or more of the crowded districts or districts showing a dearth of lands available for the enlargement of uneconomic holdings. ' But that is O'Connor Power's Bill, which you rejected. How can I take it up ? ' Mr. Parnell was informed afresh that the Government would advance £50,000 in case Mr. Parnell took up migration. To the tremendous indignation of the original promoter of the project, Mr. Parnell yielded to the sirens of the Treasury bench. £50,000, all to be wasted egregiously, were voted to a company under the presidency of Mr. Parnell for the purchase of estates in aid of migration. The Bodkin estate, as I remember, was bought for the money, proved to be unsuitable, and closed the experiment in a ludicrous fizzle. But the Parnellite press and platform, in the meantime, had shown with eloquent unanimity that the greatest of all national leaders had once more used his commanding influence to obtain a great reform for Ireland, which contained, as in a kernel, the whole settlement of the land question in the west ; and that the matter indicated also that there were beginning to be some glimmerings of real sympathy with Ireland in the policy of the Gladstone Cabinet, which was exactly what the Gladstone Cabinet had fished for. Nobody who wanted a cheerful and optimist line of conversation spoke of the policy of migration to Mr. O'Connor Power for some time subsequently.

The question of the Irish secondary schools came up in the year 1883. Professing the keenest sympathy with the

deficiency of intermediate schools in Ireland and bewailing the obstacles created by the denominational questions prevalent in Ireland, the Government brought in a measure for applying £50,000 a year to the encouragement of education in this marvellous manner. It did not propose to set up secondary schools of a denominational character. It did not propose to set up schools of an undenominational character. It did not propose to authorise local authorities to set up schools of a proper educational standard according to the denominational preferences of the localities, leaving the Government outside of the decision or selection. It did not establish any plan for leading the children of the awful primary schools out of the slough of despond of their organised ignorance. It neither established a standard, nor indicated a system, nor helped an idea. It merely distributed £50,000 a year among the existing sort-of-schools on a no-principle unprecedented out of bedlam. There were to be intermediate education examinations for all Ireland. There were to be prizes for proficiency in all the subjects of imaginable study, with prizes to the schools in proportion to the success of the examinees in anythingarian haphazard. A boy could get prizes in spelling, arithmetic, and botany. He could get prizes in writing, French, and history. He might get prizes in English, trigonometry, and geography. A boy might pick, by the selection of his masters, of course, any combination of incongruous snippets of education, just as his masters might think his memory would bear the strain. Instead of getting any regular education fitting them for the university or the technical college, all the children in Ireland, boys and girls, were to be set learning the lists of separate subjects which brought most prizes and result fees to the school proprietors. When the lad or girl had gleaned all the fruit attaching to the snippets and sections of secondary education, he or she was returned to the parents, a finished specimen of non-training, snippet-information, and no-education. The schools, said the Catholic Bishop of Limerick, train the children to be total failures, who are fit for nothing in the world. The schools



are mere money-making machines, said a recent Chief Secretary. That was the intermediate education of 1883, corresponding not unworthily to the university education of 1879. When any piece of excessive foolishness is to be passed upon Ireland—except foolishness affecting the land laws—it can usually count upon the concurrence of the two front benches. On the land question alone the two English parties disagree, and, remarkable to note, their disagreement on the land question is as unconcerned with the real condition and prosperity of Ireland as their beautiful agreement in every other form of incapacity.

The revision of the franchise and the distribution of seats, which was passed in 1885 in conformity with the principle of the infallibility of numbers and the sovereignty of the dead level, placed the entire representation at the absolute disposal of the force which could promise most and which could pay most. There was only one force in Ireland at the time, the force of the League which promised to constituencies of peasants that 'no rent' would soon be a reality, and which had the American money to overbear the competition or candidature of all who were dependent on their own private pockets for the means to fight an election. Household suffrage extended to all the Irish counties, the representation of all urban places outside of little more than half a dozen towns merged in the truly rural vote; there was the situation which the Reform Acts of 1885 set before the dollars of Mr. Ford at the disposal of Mr. Parnell. If you contested an Irish seat with your private resources, you had to meet the candidature of a man of straw, with £2000, if necessary, to swamp the constituency to return a servitor of the contributors of the £2000. There was some preliminary sparring between the two Houses in 1884 upon a dispute as to whether a Franchise Bill was to follow the Redistribution Bill, or whether a dissolution might be sprung merely on redistribution; and much high phrasing was exchanged between the recognised phrasemakers on the ancient and useful topic of the rights of the Houses. But that is quite beside the Irish



question. The great thing as regarded Ireland was that Mr. Gladstone had made what was represented by Parnell absolutely ascendant and omnipotent in the sphere of the Irish electorate. There could be nothing more about the claims of intelligence, nothing more of the balance of the urban and the rural life, nothing more of the claims of classes and interests not to be ignored in the grand inquest of the nation. Ireland was to be, as regards the five-sixths of it, even as Oklahoma or Oregon. There was to be no history, and every shanty was to be co-sovereign. A single institution was necessarily left standing in the inundation which submerged everything else; but the Church, with her bishoprics, and her parishes, and their vigilant array of mitred and tonsured incumbents, was still too unready in presence of the recent triumphs of the lay demagogues, the spell of the American money, the factitious unity of the masses. When dissension had entered in, the clergy would come again into their own, and Mr. Gladstone and his successors would again look to Maynooth instead of New York. The reign of New York would not have been very long, but, surely, had it not been glorious? From 1879 to 1889, from the Land League to the Divorce Court, that and no more was to be the reign of the uncrowned king. I am not blaming Mr. Gladstone's strategy. I am an historian, with this advantage over most historians, that I do not write merely from outside observations, but from intimate experience. Mr. Gladstone had decided in his keen intelligence that Parnell could be his best card for the Liberal pacification of Ireland, and he led up to that play as he knew how. When Gladstone was done with Parnell, we know what happened. I, who knew my old comrade, knew that he would be helpless potter's clay in the manipulation of those aged iron fingers.

The old parliamentary hand, indeed, disdained few of the arts of the political cajoler in order to strengthen his hold on the leading Parnellites at this period, when he was preparing further developments. I remember an occasion when the Parnellites were attacking the estimates, and Mr.

Healy, burning for retrenchment or afire for efficiency, proposed that public servants should be compulsorily retired at sixty-five, as too old for their work. We had a division, and as the opposite streams passed one another from the opposing lobbies, I saw Mr. Gladstone—then approaching seventy-five—all smiles and waggery, approaching Healy: ‘Very good, Mr. Healy, very good! Put the old men on the shelf at sixty-five. Throw them on the rubbish heap. Too old for any good, Mr. Healy.’ ‘Oh, sir,’ blundered the flabbergasted Tiger Tim, ‘I do not mean that.’ It was not often that men saw a rift in the composure of the street arab of Parliament. Mr. Gladstone passed to the ministerial bench in huge glee; and crestfallen Healy retired to his seat, soon to be put in spirits by the envy of his colleagues at the fortunate Tiger being ‘chaffed’ in full House by the Premier. Gladstone always liked Healy for the latter’s careful knowledge of the Land Act; which, by the way, led to valuable employment for the Tiger in the Irish Land Courts as advocate for armies of farmer applicants for diminished rents. Healy, in turn, was almost as devoted to the Premier’s greatness as was Mr. Sexton himself. These Parnellites had still, pending the full reconciliation, to die in their turn on the ‘flure’ of the House, but in their most rumbustious agonies they never failed to watch for the silent or smiling appreciation of the great opponent. If they still were bound to chasten the Liberal party, nothing less did they love Mr. Gladstone. While Parnell was toying away the hours in the lotusland of Eltham, his pinchbeck palladins were subjected to an influence which was to triumph over Parnell altogether in a few years.<sup>1</sup> In reality, almost all the Parnellites were extreme Liberals and Radicals, and their Nationalism was little more than ‘Down with landlords!’

I have already indicated, I think, that Mr. Parnell’s

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Barry O’Brien, in his *Life of Parnell*, vol. ii, pp. 332–33, mentions that Parnell expressed to him his fear of Gladstone’s superiority long before the final breach. Speaking of Gladstone, Parnell said to Mr. Barry O’Brien in 1886: ‘I was no match for him. He got more out of me than I ever got out of him.’



retirement to Eltham at this period was almost a necessity of his standing agreement with Mr. Gladstone at and since the Kilmainham compact. Mr. Parnell expected that, under due pressure, the Liberal party would come to regard the Irish situation as Mr. Gladstone was understood by Parnell to regard it more and more already; and meantime Parnell felt that he was bound to help Mr. Gladstone in the introduction of those Liberal principles into Irish government which formed the famous addendum of the letter which Forster had forced Parnell to read to the House in 1882. On the other hand, Parnell could not allow the Irish agitation to go too low or to become too calm, which was the sole means of extracting from the American branch the dollars of the *Irish World*. Without the dollars there was neither organisation nor party nor power. Without the agitation there would be no dollars. But Parnell was bound to Gladstone to favour the introduction of Liberal principles, and Gladstone was showing that he desired to get Parnell as much credit as he could in Irish legislation. The practical solution of the difficulty for the moment was to let the lieutenants, the O'Briens, Dillons, Sextons, &c., run the agitation in Ireland, and keep it booming to the amount necessary to affect the American purse-strings; to have the chief in a certain reserve with respect to Mr. Gladstone; and to look to the future for the natural developments. If Parnell was in the House when Healy and O'Brien were on the warpath, the affair of outposts at once assumed the appearance of a serious engagement. By keeping out of the House, Parnell allowed his lieutenants to keep the American sympathy warm, and yet avoid decisive hostilities. 'Come out with me,' Captain O'Shea would say. 'You can take a holiday, and let Sexton fill the *Freeman*.' Parnell would smile, would go away with O'Shea, and very often after an hour or two O'Shea would go to his club, and Parnell would go down to Eltham, where a bright and charming hostess was enchanted to welcome such a conversational substitute for a dining-out husband. Parnell hated dining out, and being rather a dull



man in talk, was delighted to be talked to by a clever and fascinating woman who thought it the best sort of conversation. There was really a very intimate and enduring connexion between Parnell's obligatory moderation towards Gladstone and his consequent preference for charming evenings at Eltham instead of the stormy attractions of an O'Brien-Healy shindy in the House. 'If I must not fight Gladstone, thank heaven I can visit Mrs. O'Shea,' was actually and really a faithful summary of Parnell's point of view. Of course, I do not discuss the question of falling in love with one's conversationalist.

There is no apparent knowledge or suspicion anywhere, it seems, of the extent of Mr. Parnell's abstention from the front of conflict with the Liberal party during this stage of the Eltham-cum-Hawarden epoch, which endured, broadly speaking, from the release from Kilmainham to the announcement of Gladstonian Home Rule, or from 1882 to 1886. During these four years Mr. Parnell had been promoted or transmogrified by Mr. Gladstone's fervid fancy from the Catiline marching through rapine to disintegration to a sort of gentler George Washington wiping out Bunker's Hill for a more liberal colonial charter. But Parnell's effort, perhaps a very pleasant and easy effort, was unmistakable. In the session of 1885, for instance, out of 400 divisions, Parnell is recorded as having been present at only fifty. For seven-eighths of the session Parnell chose Eltham rather than Westminster. He was, indeed, a parliamentary version of that captain bold 'in battle much delighting' who, for reasons which possibly resembled Parnell's subtly attractive influences on both sides of the Atlantic, 'bade the rest keep fighting,' while he devoted himself to less belligerent courses. It adds a curious savour of the cynical or the unexplained to the subsequent drama in the Divorce Court that the prolonged residences at Eltham, whatever else they were, were at all events part of the system of personal effacement which Parnell had arranged with Mr. Gladstone.

It must be confessed that if Parnell left the active agitation to his lieutenants, they certainly exercised their

delegated authority with every symptom of pleasure in the extent of their commission. How to say enough to please America, but not too much to outrage Mr. Gladstone or to disturb the serene confidence of the Parnellite Liberals to the point of exasperation, was seen to be less difficult than might be apprehended. The verbal war in the House was unrelaxing. In Ireland the situation was horrible and remained horrible. When, on the temporary fall of the Gladstone Government in the summer of 1885, Mr. Parnell utilised the advent of a Tory Cabinet to office by a comprehensive indictment of the administration of Earl Spencer, he cited, as an indication of the severity of the rule of the viceroy whom Mr. O'Brien called the Red Earl, that forty men had been condemned to death and that twenty-one had been executed. He might as justly have relied on the non-execution of every man of the remaining nineteen as a triumphant proof of the leniency of the Spencer administration. Boycotting, intimidation, attempts at assassination, assassinations had filled the land, and the abominable monotony of the bloodiest news continued to monopolise the intelligence from Ireland. The subscribers in America showed themselves so satisfied with the lawlessness of the prevailing disposition, that an active campaign of dynamite outrages in England itself came to realise, in endeavour at least, the party paymaster's intoxicating vision of a city of six million English going up in flames lighted by 'fifty Irishmen.' The dynamite outrages in London and elsewhere were alarming and repulsive. But there was one difference between the Irish political scoundrel and the Russian terrorist. The terrorist, neither knowing nor fearing eternal punishment for unrepented sin, flings his bomb with the resolution to perish himself rather than miss his victims. The Irish Catholic assassin wants a little while at least to elapse between the commission of an atrocity and his appearance at the Judgment, beyond which is hellfire. The struggle between the contending impulses of hate and self-preservation make the Irish outrage a pale copy of the genuine act of Nihilism. Besides, the same



fear of hellfire made Pat Ford's emissaries more desirous to injure property than to destroy life, and most desirous of causing alarm instead of effecting massacre. The detonations of nitro-glycerine produced more dollars than destructions. But it was a horrible time.

The large amount of liberty of initiative left to the lieutenants in the House had an untoward influence on Parnell's position, which became more untoward till it increased to the final disaster. While Parnell was contenting himself with fifty divisions out of 400, and was completely absent from every field of serious excess in Ireland, the freedom of initiative, the conscience of being in the public eye without the presence of the master, begat a developing sense of independence, and sometimes Parnell already received warnings that the marshals were capable of criticising Napoleon. When Messrs. Dillon, O'Brien, Healy, and Harrington excogitated the plan of campaign, they were so enamoured of their creation, that they defied the disapproval of Parnell himself. As Parnell was starting for Ireland to suppress by his ascendancy his recalcitrant deputies, he was met at Euston, on the very threshold of his journey, by Mr. Edmund Dwyer Gray, who had crossed in hot haste to warn him that the plan of campaign would be maintained in spite of his condemnation, and that all the more violent spirits of the agitation would support the lieutenants even in open revolt. Parnell decided to return to Eltham. No doubt he sent a message to Mr. Gladstone to say that in the absence of Home Rule even his influence was not always adequate to repress extreme sections of his followers. Mr. Gladstone was increasingly disposed to proclaim his conviction that something in the nature of Home Rule was required for the full utilisation of Mr. Parnell's readiness to oblige. I had many conversations with Dwyer Gray, who, not only as politician, but proprietor and manager of Ireland's most popular daily paper, had innumerable opportunities of estimating the trend of the situation. He said again and again that Parnell's influence 'was a good deal when going with the



popular tide, but very little when going against it,' that Parnell had 'no such command as formerly over his leading followers,' that very little 'might set up a revolt,' that Gladstone 'had more hold of the party than appeared on the surface,' that there were Parnellites 'who believed that they could fill Parnell's shoes much better than their original wearer.' I was prepared for all this. As 'the bit of a county gentleman' who answered to Mr. Matthew Harris's primitive political strategy became dwarfed by comparison with the organisation which the American money had created in his name; and as wider opportunities of ambition opened before his lieutenants in the intercourse with English parties, so Parnell's leadership tended to revert to its former figure-headship; and a figure-head is, after all, a detachable ornament. With little information, with no statesmanship, with undecided aims, with family pride, and personal courage, Parnell could live on prestige, just so long as nobody of importance was interested in knocking the gilt off the prestige. When Downing Street and Maynooth College combined for the purpose, Parnell found almost every man of the group of his lieutenants 'who had made his pile' ready to desert to the sources of larger expectations.

The incident at the Galway election in 1885 in connexion with the candidature of Captain O'Shea, who was supported by Parnell, was already the gravest possible indication of the rottenness of Parnell's hold on his party three years before the excuse afforded by the divorce. It was only possible because there was not so much genuine pride of national independence in two-thirds of the Parnellites, including Parnell's most pampered lieutenants, as would incommode the swallow of the proverbial midge. Parnell's right was absolutely clear and intangible. O'Shea was an excellent candidate, a nominal Home Ruler like the rest of them, a skilful counsellor to Parnell in many emergencies, for Captain O'Shea was one of the best-informed and most intelligent men about town. He was accepted candidate for Galway. What had the suspicions

of a couple of members of Parliament about other men's wives to do with the leadership of a party?

Beyond private suspicions there was absolutely no shadow of a ground for impugning the conduct of anybody. In fact there was no legitimate ground even for private suspicions. The relations of Parnell and the O'Sheas were absolutely correct. Parnell and O'Shea had been intimate friends for years. The silent, rather dull listener suited extremely well the brilliant and amusing man-about-town, who mingled a double dose of shrewd observation, approaching to practical statesmanship, with his gay and easy excursions into all political camps and alongside all dinner tables which were well served and brightly and intelligently shared. O'Shea had served Parnell faithfully for many years, and if he gained some importance and protection in return, he deserved them all. It is simply detestable that because one has a beautiful wife, therefore the intimate intercourse of good friends must be interrupted. As for Mrs. O'Shea, her conduct, manner, conversation were absolutely unexceptionable and always full of a rare distinction which commanded respect while it attracted admiration. Parnell and she were good friends and devoted intimates from the beginning. Her husband was warmly attached to Parnell. She became equally attached herself. She was immensely useful to her husband's friend. Parnell was a terribly lonely man. He was in many respects a refined and sensitive gentleman. His political ambitions and contiguities, though they involved compromising and degrading alliances, left the man haughtily resentful of the necessities of a situation which constantly affronted his better tastes. He heartily despised the political bootblacks who surrounded him, bootblacks of talent, it may be admitted, but thorough vulgarians and thorough time-servers, who never quite put off their origins nor ever acquired a similitude of manners with their chief. I think that Mr. Justin McCarthy, the London-refined man of letters and fine appreciation, was the only one of the inner Land League set with whom Parnell, as a man of breeding,



ever found himself at home. The rest were endurable until they became unendurable. Parnell was no scholar, no statesman, an opportunist not always clear sighted in making his selection of measures and men ; but he was a man of quiet breeding, and a gallant gentleman at his best, while he was never less than a gentleman out of sorts at his worst. To a man like him, lonely, proud, disappointed with every new ally, in health which was never assured, forced to comparative idleness by his compact with Gladstone—a compact which he kept too loyally for his own interests—with singularly few personal resources of pleasure or occupation, unread and averse from reading, the society of a beautiful, accomplished, and singularly judicious and observant woman of almost the best world, who was also his loyal friend, was remarkably and inexpressibly delightful and entrancing. Though a word of earthly love had never passed between Charles Stewart Parnell and Katherine Woods O'Shea, there was naturally between them from the outset a deep community of sentiment, a conformity of tastes, a loyal friendship, and a frank and open honesty of confidence which made their intercourse a treasure to both ; sacred to the woman ; useful, educative, inspiring, restful, and altogether indispensable for the man. I have seen the friendships of men and women in a score of great cities. I have often marked how they grew up like a poem round lives which without them would be stern, and dark, and harsh. I have rarely witnessed a closer and nobler sentiment and reciprocity of soul than existed between Parnell and Mrs. O'Shea for years at least, and perhaps till the intolerable weight and torrent of abominable scandal—aggravated by all the meanest instincts of the basest jealousies and calculations—swept those two beyond conventions and beyond a higher code than friendship wrought to passion is wont to recognise. When vile calumniators rushed about the streets of Galway vociferating to startled priest and crude mechanic that 'the membership for Galway was only Parnell's hush-money to the husband of his mistress,' the assertion



was abominably false as regarding every circumstance of the connexion between the three friends. It certainly roused O'Shea to fierce suspicion, artfully inflamed to hate. It made Parnell feel, as a gentleman might feel, that now, right or wrong, there was a woman to be helped at all costs. It at least contributed to drive the woman over the precipice. But in itself it was the most unprincipled exhibition of the unscrupulousness of the sort of man whom no laws of social usage bind, because they never existed for him; and it was the most wantonly disloyal mutiny which was ever raised against a leader. None of the mudslingers knew anything of the private lives of their victims. Rugged Biggar, a downright, plain-dealing merchant of pig's meat, had ability and honesty which often commanded my deep respect; but his sense of delicacy and honour could not be elevated by parliamentary blue-books out of the original mould of the Belfast provision store. Yet odious and gratuitous and absurd as was the scandal, it is a crowning proof of the rottenness of Parnell's hold on that party which professed to worship him, and those lieutenants whom he had created *ex nihilo*, that he had to quote Gladstone's secret pledge to bring in Home Rule as supreme appeal to his followers not to join in shaking his authority by siding with the libellers of Captain O'Shea. Among other consequences of that appeal to Gladstone, it made Parnell the fore-pledged adherent of almost any project which Mr. Gladstone might produce as his conception of the kind of Home Rule which suited his conception of the future relations between the Liberal party and Ireland. To boggle at Mr. Gladstone's projects would now be equivalent to a surrender of the only means which Parnell had found to be efficacious enough to prevent his followers from openly discarding his authority, on a question of a purely private character, several years before the official exposure in the Divorce Court. The fact was, that Gladstone's influence dominated Parnell's principal lieutenants and the majority of his followers from very soon after the Kilmainham compact, and increased with every subsequent year. By

voluntarily withdrawing himself from overtly systematic opposition to the Liberal leader, Parnell was both condemning himself to a certain eclipse, and was allowing Mr. Gladstone to assume a growing importance in Irish eyes as the powerful patron who would yet accord everything which Parnell could only demand. If Gladstone's entry into the Kilmainham compact with the man whom he had denounced as a second Catiline was more opportune than consistent, Parnell's promise to promote Liberal principles was gratuitous suicide. He was under no necessity. He had only to sit still. His friends in the Liberal party, the Chamberlains, Russells, Dilkes, were wild to get him released. Mr. Forster had totally failed to work the burlesque coercion at his disposal, except to change disturbance to anarchy. Gladstone was wild to get a chance for his Land Act. Parnell had only to wait for terms which must be more favourable to him with every day of Liberal confusion and Irish revolution. Yet he must promise to support Liberal principles in return for Mr. Gladstone's good dispositions!<sup>1</sup> As a result, Mr. Gladstone considered—and Parnell accepted the interpretation—that the Irish 'leader' was bound to offer no more ostensible hostility to the British Government than was absolutely necessary for the continued collection of the American dollars. I hardly wonder at Parnell's subsequent complaint of the tactics of the grand old spider. He had gratuitously walked, like the short-sighted politician he was, into the spider's web.

It is very easy, however, to rate or seem to rate Parnell for throwing away chances and courting that overthrow

<sup>1</sup> The exact words of Parnell's promise, in return for 'a practical settlement of the land question'—nothing stipulated for Home Rule!—was that it 'would enable us to co-operate cordially for the future with the Liberal party in forwarding Liberal principles.' Mr. Forster insisted upon this engagement being read out in the House, May 8, 1882, by Parnell himself. It was no wonder that Mr. Gladstone had exclaimed, on reading Parnell's engagement: 'On the whole, Parnell's letter is, I think, the most extraordinary I ever read. I cannot help feeling indebted to O'Shea.' Parnell had taken Gladstone as his master, and he never got out of reach of bit and bridle afterwards.

My letters to Mr. H. J. Gladstone had urged the release of the suspects as required by Irish peace. Parnell promised subordination to Liberalism!



which was to come. It was easy for Mr. Gladstone to regard Parnell's comedown as 'the most extraordinary I ever read.' On the assumption that Parnell was a supremely strong and statesmanlike leader, according to the more or less established legend, his collapse was certainly 'most extraordinary.' If he had been supremely strong and statesmanlike, he could have made hay of the Liberal party. He was a very noble and picturesque figure, who had been called the leader of the Irish race, but who was only a fine divisional commander and a first-class fighting man. He wanted to get out of Kilmainham, and he crept out. I do not wonder that he found it and its company absolutely unendurable a moment longer. Imagine being boxed up with Mr. Dillon, and Mr. William O'Brien, and Mr. Thomas Sexton, and a couple hundred of the country grocers and cornerboys whom Mr. Forster's silly nets had swept into the old prison. Parnell might esteem these worthy people on the platform; but to have them from breakfast to lunch, and from lunch to dinner, and from dinner to bedtime! *Toujours perdrix* was nothing to it. Often, when I affected to sympathise with him on the interruption of that high and pleasant companionship, he curtly 'wished I had enjoyed it myself.' As a matter of fact also, Kilmainham made Parnell deadly ill, and I am convinced that his health never recovered from the monotony, the cramped space, the dubious air, the lack of exercise, the uncongenial society, the food which was palatial to stout bucolic persons, but was heavy poison to a delicate sybarite. I had the closest and most intimate opportunity of observing him on his temporary release from Kilmainham in April 1882. Mr. Justin McCarthy and I had met him at Willesden, we had all three driven, and talked, and dined together till ten o'clock in the evening. I, who used to have him almost every day at my rooms for years, only a couple of years previously, was simply horrified at his miserable appearance. Pallid, hollow-cheeked, dull-eyed, weary and wasted, he was totally changed from the gallant comrade who had fought through the twenty-six hours' sitting, when I had



audaciously boasted, in reply to an impressive admonition from Sir William Harcourt, that 'of course, we were going to fight it out. Six Irishmen to six hundred Englishmen formed an ideal match. As the armies were equal, let the dance begin.' Poor Parnell now hardly looked fit to walk through a quadrille. Those six months of monotony and confinement had made him almost a wreck. The man's eyes hungered for freedom and pleasant friends. During the years 1884 and 1885, when he was permanently under the necessity of frequently absenting himself from his place in Parliament, and when, in consequence, some of his disloyal followers railed furiously, I had many opportunities of witnessing at close range the ravages which some hidden ill was making in that gallant and stately presence. Although I was farther from him politically than ever, and had not only repudiated his party in Ireland but his chairmanship in the House of Commons since the summer of 1883, there was much of the old comradeship between us when nobody was looking. I often thought that Parnell would have dearly liked to throw the party to the devil, as I had. But he had pinned his expectations on Mr. Gladstone's conversion of the Liberal party, and he held resolutely to the chance of being able to present to Ireland something that might look like the self-government which Devoy and Davitt had substituted at the time of the New Departure for the historical programme of a Grattan Parliament supplemented by the Imperial federation of Butt. A chance encounter in the Strand in the early spring of 1884 was followed by a long series of regular meetings during the eighteen months which followed. I had been simply shocked by the spectacle which Parnell had presented. Looking half disguised, he had a bowler hat pulled down to his ears, an untidy muffler raised to his eyes, and a slovenly and well-worn overcoat covering his neat frockcoat. But his face, his eyes, were the worst of the picture. He was anæmic, with weary, red-lidded eyes. 'What, Parnell!' 'Glad to see you, O'Donnell!' He had been looking apparently into a pawnbroker's window,

and I was on my way to lunch at the Café Romano. I asked him to lunch, and, as usually happened when we met in the old days in what he jestingly called 'my country' of Fleet Street and the Strand, he became my guest without any effort to be the host. He hesitated about going to the Café, alleging his dislike of recognition; but I reminded him that Romano's clients were mostly dramatic and literary people who ignored the prosaic existence of politicians. Conscious of his seedy appearance, Parnell had pulled off the coat and muffler, and doffed the bowler hat as we entered. I found a pleasant corner, near where some ladies of the stage and their friends formed a bright party superior to the rules of the House of Commons. We chose an excellent lunch; but not until Parnell had swallowed a couple of large glasses of good Burgundy, did he seem to possess the smallest appetite. I roundly asserted that he was killing himself. In the old days he had told me that he had a tendency to weakness of the heart and to a renal affection; but that good feeding and plenty of exercise were prescribed as certain to make him quite healthy and strong. 'Then you are starving yourself now,' I said. I cannot relate the long conversations; but my cross-examinations convinced me that his food was irregularly taken and often unsuitable, that he had come to rely on Burgundy to give him the fillip which he ought to have owed to nature and exercise, and that a sort of immense vacuity had invaded his existence which made a healthy reaction increasingly difficult. He never drank less than a whole bottle of good Burgundy at any of our lunches or dinners together. It never had the slightest tendency to produce any vinous result. It seemed to be absolutely necessary to give the man an appetite and a zest for living and talking. I found out very soon that the O'Sheas were simply indispensable to his existence; and both husband and wife appeared to be the kindest and most considerate of friends to the morbidly proud and morbidly lonely man. He frankly said that O'Shea was a very clever fellow, but Mrs. O'Shea was 'fit to be Prime Minister.' I had myself



drawn the conclusion that she was a woman of high intellectual powers. Then she was charming besides. Parnell certainly did not speak of her as a lover, but as a disciple and devotee. It was clear that Mrs. O'Shea mothered the haughty, lonely man, who fled to her dominating and delightful company from the intolerable rant and monotony of his political associates. I think that he simply detested the expedient companionships of politics. A good deal of his disguising—which was made to play such a distorted part in the subsequent accusations in the Divorce Court—seemed to me to be intended to escape as often as possible all touch and notice of his Irish colleagues much more than the curiosity or hostility of the British public. I coaxed him to a theatre one day to admire the exquisite poetry of motion danced by the incomparable Kate Vaughan. 'You are sure that none of the fellows will see us?' 'Not where I will put you; unless possibly Justin Huntly McCarthy, and he is too good a fellow to peach.' He looked cautiously round the theatre several times before feeling quite comfortable for the enjoyment of the scene.

He frequently spoke of his followers, even his leading lieutenants, in language of lurid contempt. Upon this point I opposed him invariably. I told him that Napoleon did not despise the humblest of his grenadiers, that, on the contrary, he leaned on their shoulder, and plucked their ear or moustache. Parnell growled: 'Oh, Napoleon never met So-and-so.' I was not the only man to censure Parnell on his tone of utter insolence towards his party, with very few exceptions. I know a couple of distinguished journalists still living, one English and the other Irish, who had been fanatically devoted to Parnell, and who had often remonstrated with him on his ferocious scorn towards this, that, and the other of his most gushingly effusive henchmen. I drew the conclusion that it was not merely the insolence of the well-born squire towards nobodies of talent which could explain this depreciation. I felt certain that Parnell believed that they followed 'not the leader but the luck.' If the luck turned, if the leader stumbled,



Parnell already believed that some of them were quite ready to change the allegiance and stab the chief. Four men who were subsequently conspicuous in the secession to Mr. Gladstone, came most frequently under the lash of Parnell's contempt. But there is reason to believe that he was habitually overbearing to the mass of his followers. This was unjust and unwise. They were poor, poorly educated, taking their weekly wage from the impolite hands of Biggar, who scolded them over their expenses with rough familiarity. But they were honestly convinced of the goodness of their miserable Land Leaguism, and they began at all events by idolising Parnell. Parnell had taken the American dollars to drive out the noblemen and gentlemen who mustered so thick in the Home Rule party of Butt. He had deliberately supported the somewhat proletarian selections of Messrs. Devoy and Davitt. He had dipped deepest of all into the collecting-bag of Patrick Ford. Nothing but bad health, the sense of apprehended failure, the consciousness that he was dependent for his existence as a party leader upon the subservient ability of the men who had been his puppets, at least in his opinion ; nothing, above all, but the growing sense that the star of Gladstone was rising, and that his own orb might be setting, in the view and the wish of many of his former fanatics, can palliate, I cannot say excuse, the worser portions of Parnell's attitude towards his followers. If he feared their treachery, he was doing his best to ensure it. When Gladstone gave the signal, when the clergy seized the opportunity, the ferocious bitterness with which the emancipated helots rent their ancient master at once attested and avenged the years of truculent overlordship. Gallant, sensitive, haughty Parnell was no more a leader than a statesman. He knew that there was mutiny. Instead of suppressing, he envenomed it.

There was one incident of the growing disintegration of Parnell's party long before the Divorce Court which struck me far more even than the prosecution of the plan of campaign in the teeth of his condemnation. This was

the horrible affair of *United Ireland* and the 'French and Cornwall scandals.' A couple of debased old men, inferior functionaries in every way, were implicated in a filthy charge of immorality; and it occurred to the League organ to treat it as an illustration of the manners and customs of the English in Ireland, and of the Castle and Viceregal Court in particular! A patriot, as published in *United Ireland*, August 30, 1884, proposed that Earl Spencer 'should be raised a step in the Peerage with the appropriate title of Duke of Sodom and Gomorrah.' Such were the patriotic tactics of the men who were soon to be invited to English country houses! *United Ireland* went the abominable length of publishing in its weekly columns, intended, as it often asseverated, 'for the pure homes of Holy Ireland,' lengthy extracts of the most filthy portions of the most filthy evidence in the dirty exhibition of senile decay and degradation. Parnell simply raged with impotent fury. He cursed and swore like the Army in Flanders. All the manliest elements of his nature revolted at the disgusting idiocy of quoting a dirty little case of aberration among nobodies as having anything to do with the viceroyalty of Lord Spencer; and he used savage ridicule at the 'pure Irish editor' who was printing that sewage for perusal in the 'pure Irish home.' He was absolutely unable to check the infamy. I have been told that he was forced to stoop so low as to utter some pretence of extenuation of the traffickers in foul printing. Men who write about Parnell's power lasting unimpaired till the Divorce Court are simply absurd. He was in the toils from the moment that he signed the Kilmainham compact. His lieutenants were calculating, like Dugald Dalgetty, when it would be permissible and profitable to alter the cockade. Profoundly ill, utterly weary, hopelessly isolated, devoid of initiative, he was still—for outsiders—the idol on a pedestal, and he was really little more.





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## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE FIRST BILL FOR GLADSTONIAN HOME RULE—MR. GLADSTONE SUPPLANTS PARNELL

The Sessions of 1885 and 1886—Mr. Gladstone wants to exclude the Irish—Parnell's Last Effort for a Grattan Parliament—The Mutual Accusations of Party Government—Lord Salisbury and Home Rule—Lord Randolph Churchill and Parnellism—The Reform Act of 1885 and its Consequences in Ireland—The Fall of the Gladstone Ministry in 1885 as Preliminary to the Conversion of the Liberal Party—The First Gladstonian Home Rule Bill—An Impossible Fancy Scheme—Mr. Chamberlain avenges the Empire and himself—Mr. Gladstone leads the Converted Liberals and the Disappointed Parnellites into Opposition—Parnell more retiring and ill than ever—Mr. Gladstone champions the Plan of Campaign and out-Parnells Parnell—The Union of Hearts and the Attacks of the *Times*—Parnellism and Crime?

THE time was now at hand when Mr. Gladstone was to present to the Parliament the plan for removing the Irish members from Westminster and erecting a one-chambered colonial semi-legislature in Dublin which the Parnellite party were to hail as the realisation of the lawmaking independence of Ireland. By reviving the control of the English Privy Council, which had been torn down by the Volunteers of 1782, by abolishing the Irish House of Lords—which was essential to the Irish Constitution—by making Ireland contribute to the Imperial expenditure without any share in the Imperial representation, the versatile Premier undertook to trample under-foot at the one step the policies of Butt, Castlereagh, and Grattan—of all shades of Nationalists and Imperialists together!—and demanded the support of all parties for a measure which had no ancestry and which was to have no progeniture. The incongruous irrelevance of the whole proposal and all its parts at least attested the exuberant inventiveness of the



vivacious veteran. Let me place on record at once that Mr. Parnell, as if foreseeing the impending absurdity, took steps to proclaim again the principles of Butt and Grattan, and, before accepting devoutly the Gladstonian specific, to predeclare its entire insufficiency. On January 21, 1885, in a speech to the people of Cork, the constituency for which he was member, Parnell declared in clear, final, and unmistakable terms that he was inflexibly true as steel to the ancient and historic Constitution of the King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland. '*We cannot ask for less than the restitution of Grattan's Parliament*, with its important privileges, and wide, far-reaching Constitution. We cannot under the British Constitution ask for more than the restitution of Grattan's Parliament. But no man has a right to fix the boundary of the march of a nation.' The last sentence was intended, of course, for consumption in Irish-American circles and among the Ford and Finnerty subscribers. But words could not be clearer, firmer, or more explicit than that declaration and pledge of 1885 to accept nothing less than the old Irish Parliament. Within a twelvemonth Parnell was flinging the old Irish Parliament into the lumber-room, and had obediently acclaimed the new Gladstonian sub-legislature that was to be under the supreme authority of the King, Lords, and Commons—at Westminster! He had declared his national preferences at Cork in presence of his constituents. He bowed to Mr. Gladstone's excogitations in resigned conformity with colleagues who had long since agreed that Gladstone on the Treasury bench was worth far more than all the dead heroes and repudiated traditions of the Old House in College Green. So accommodating was the adaptability of a lath-and-plaster leader painted to look like iron. But it is due, perhaps, to his inclinations, if not to his consistency or courage, to remember that for a moment he had stood again with apparent pride on the ancient platform of Grattan and Butt only a twelvemonth before deserting it for ever. Mr. Gladstone was henceforth the leader of Mr. Parnell as he had gradually become the

leader, long before, of most of Mr. Parnell's parliamentary followers.

When was Mr. Gladstone converted to Home Rule? Mr. Gladstone was never converted to Home Rule, except to Home Rule for England. He endeavoured to free the British Parliament from the incursions and the disturbances of a band of aliens. That was the central idea of his system of exclusion; nor were any of the privileges with which he affected to meet any corresponding grievance of the expelled aliens in the least degree inconsistent with the disposition to confer moderate powers of local legislation upon an Irish local assembly, which he had declared himself to be prepared to concede even while at open war with Parnell, and which was latent in his Midlothian speeches in 1880. He had only taken an exacter measure of the men with whom he meant to deal. That was all. In his address to Midlothian in 1880 he had defined 'the true supporters of the Union' as 'those who firmly uphold the supreme authority of Parliament'—meaning the Imperial Parliament at Westminster—'but exercise that authority to bind the three nations by the indissoluble tie of liberal and equal laws.' As much local government for Irishmen as the Imperial Parliament thought safe for Ireland, together with their perpetual interdiction from interference or representation in Imperial affairs;—that was the practical realisation of the declaration at Midlothian contained in the Irish Sub-Legislative Assembly Bill of 1886. Not much more than a twelvemonth, indeed, after the Midlothian declaration, Mr. Gladstone had emphasised its nature in a letter to Lord Granville in the autumn of 1881, in which he said (Morley's 'Life,' ii. 223): 'Home Rule has for one of its aims local government—an excellent thing to which I would attach no limits except the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament, and the right of all parts of the country to claim whatever might be conceded to Ireland.' Every feature of this explanation was contained in the Bill of 1886. Almost every item in the explanation would be rejected by an Irish Nationalist. We acknowledge no supremacy of any



Imperial Parliament in the Irish nation. Ireland is not one of the 'parts of the country.' It is a nation co-equal with England in historic right, sovereign autonomy, and racial pride. Even in writing to Mr. Forster in April 1882, while he had the Parnellites in Kilmainham, Mr. Gladstone expressed all the essential features of the Bill of 1886. (1) 'We must have a seriously responsible body to deal with in Ireland, and this responsibility we cannot create except through local self-government.' (2) 'We must relieve Great Britain from the enormous weight of the government of Ireland unaided by the people of Ireland.' To relieve Great Britain from the Irish (1) by their perpetual exclusion from Imperial affairs, and (2) by giving them responsible local self-government under Imperial supervision—immeasurably less than the local self-government and Imperial representation of the County of London—that was, from the beginning to the end, the consistent purpose of Mr. Gladstone's arrangements under the facetious misnomer of Irish Home Rule. The 'conversion' of that old parliamentary hand was perfectly characteristic of the most subtle mind which English parliamentarianism ever produced, supported by a bewildering eloquence and a popular prestige never united in the same English statesman. His Irish razors 'made at Westminster' were distinctly calculated and constructed for the market. That was the triumph of his dexterity. But not for use or benefit. That was the fault of inconvenient facts. Surely there never was a piece of audacity more marvellous than all the Irish legislation of the grand old man. Without an hour's experience of Ireland, without ever having trod on Irish soil, agricultural or pastoral, he had produced and applied Land Act after Land Act, and had sent to Kilmainham, suspended the rights of the subject, and exhausted the resources of menace and invitation in order to make agrarian agitation absolutely perpetual. He was now to upset the Act of Union and to split the Liberal party, to confound Mr. Pitt and to belaud Mr. Grattan, on behalf of an original measure as purely Gladstonian as one



of his contributions to the *Contemporary Review*, but which neither Pitt nor Grattan would touch with a forty-foot pole.

It is an incident of party government to accuse the other side of being perpetually prepared to sell their principles for place ; and the charge that the Conservatives had been trying to seduce the Irish vote with a vision or a mirage of Home Rule was almost bound to make its appearance at some moment or other. Let me say at once, as an observer with special means of observation, as regards all the higher elements of both English parties, there was absolutely no foundation for the suspicion of dishonest practice with the members from Ireland. I was and I am the political and nationary adversary of all of them, but I consider that it is impossible to conceive more conscientious statesmanship or partisanship than the statesmanship or partisanship on the side of Mr. Gladstone, Lord Hartington, and Lord Salisbury. You must come to the lower radicalism and the lower agrarianism, perhaps also to the mere tadpoles and tapers of Toryism, before you could meet English politicians who would sell their convictions for party profit. The strength of English administration has been its honesty, even when combined with incurable stupidity ; and the stupidest thing ever done or thought by my clever countrymen has been to deny the genuineness and the supremacy of honest convictions in the formation of British policy towards Ireland. I am convinced that Mr. Gladstone had reasoned himself into the most intense belief in the need and efficacy of the measure he had to present. Lord Hartington had always impressed me with the conviction that he was the English statesman above all others who could introduce the proposal which would solve the difficulty between England and Ireland, provided only that he was convinced of the rectitude and expediency of the step. As for the Conservatives, I knew more about the sentiments of the Conservatives than any member of Mr. Parnell's party, or perhaps any member of Mr. Gladstone's party. A Conservative Irish Nationalist myself, I had far more in

common with English Conservatives than with any other party in the House. I had been the frequent ally of the Fourth party<sup>1</sup> ever since I began to oppose the condonation of Mr. Bradlaugh's claim to take an oath which he repudiated. With Lord Randolph Churchill I was in intimate intercourse. I had no hesitation, after I left Parliament, and when he was Secretary for India, to ask him to do a good turn for my brother in the apportionment of climates and commissionerships in Bengal. My brother was in delicate health. I asked for the good climate of Darjiling, and I got it. I was out of Parliament, and resolved not to return to Westminster. It was pure friendliness which actuated the Secretary for India, and he only protected the health of a deserving servant of the Indian administration. After five years of intimate knowledge of Lord Randolph's policy, I knew that it was absolutely impossible for him to tamper with any sort of Gladstonian Home Rule or Land League ascendancy. He liked Ireland well. He had that emanation of the Young England spirit, which was his real strength, just as it formed Disraeli's charm and magic, which made him favour popular well-being which was well-being as well as popular. Probably for this reason Lord Randolph could never be understood by a professional Conservative or by a man who was going to be a Liberal.

<sup>1</sup> A very curious error regarding my relations with that able member of the Fourth party, Sir Henry Drummond Wolff—who had always been to me *persona gratissima*—occurs in *Memories of Fifty Years* by Lady St. Helier. 'I remember,' writes that distinguished hostess, 'Sir Henry Drummond Wolff and Mr. Frank O'Donnell coming to dine with me for the purpose of making each other's acquaintance. I had arranged the dinner with great care, and it was a small one. Unluckily the night before an incident occurred in the House of Commons, which had provoked a bitter quarrel between these gentlemen, so that when they arrived, it was impossible to put them anywhere within reach of each other.' I really never had a bitter quarrel with Sir Henry. We were old comrades in the House, habitually united in opposition to Mr. Gladstone's Government, and there was no need for anybody to introduce us to each other. Whenever we met in recent years, it was with mutual feelings of the friendliest kind. Besides, I never had a bitter quarrel with anybody in the House. My constant aim was to be courtesy itself in all personal relations. I fought a system, not individuals. Every veteran of those days—Mr. Balfour, Sir Henry Lucy—can remember that it was impossible to find O'Donnell out of temper. Lady St. Helier has mixed me up with some other guest of her gracious hospitality.



At any rate, he could not possibly be a Home Ruler of any Parnellite kind. Butt might have found him far more sympathetic. I had a wide acquaintance, and not a few friendships, among the stoutest Tories in the House. When Sir Robert Fowler was Lord Mayor of London he invited me to the Mansion House 'to meet Her Majesty's judges.' A Tory soldier, like General Sir Edwin Burnaby, pressed me to be his guest at the meets of the Quorn. Often and often the full strength of the Conservative party, 200 strong, had backed my opposition to Liberal projects. Mr. Escott, the attentive chronicler of English society in the reign of Queen Victoria, somewhat exaggerates my Tory prospects in attributing to some Conservative members a desire to see me become the Irish Disraeli of the squires of Britain.<sup>1</sup> But my friendships were wide and deep in the Tory ranks, and give me at least the right to know what the Tories meant on the Irish question. I, who would never take less than Grattan's Parliament, understood the sturdy Englishmen who could never tolerate a Jacobin convention on Liffey or on Thames. As for Lord Salisbury, I discussed with the Conservative chief every phase of the Irish question. He was no bigot in politics or religion. He was anxious to know what Ireland really wanted, though he might never acknowledge the whole of Ireland's right. After ten years I was as much his political and national opponent as when first I was invited to an audience in the library of Arlington House. But, at any rate, Lord Salisbury saw and recognised that there was a world of distinction between the King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland and the sort of sansculotism approved by Mr. Pat Egan and paid by Mr. Pat Ford. As for Mr. Parnell's assertion that Lord Carnarvon had promised him an Irish Parliament, the assertion was at least a remarkable hallucination. Even Mr. Parnell's most admiring biographer admits that Parnell had behaved

<sup>1</sup> 'By a curious irony of circumstance some English Conservatives thought Disraeli's successor might be supplied by an Irish colleague, Mr. F. Hugh O'Donnell, also a chief writer on the irreproachable *Morning Post*, and particularly well informed on questions of foreign policy.'—Mr. T. H. S. Escott, *King Edward VII and his Court*, p. 95.



perfectly badly in the whole affair. Lord Carnarvon, stimulated by impracticable suggestions from Sir Charles Gavan Duffy, was anxious to know what was Mr. Parnell's policy, being unaware that Mr. Parnell had no policy except to seem to ride the winning horse. Sir Charles Gavan Duffy, a Young Irelander with O'Connellite fancies, had drawn for Lord Carnarvon a sketch of Mr. Parnell's views as accurate as might be expected from an ex-Australian ex-Premier who had been out of Ireland most of his life. Lord Carnarvon held a private conversation with Parnell, and Parnell bragged of it to all his lieutenants as 'another indication' that 'both English parties' were wooing the uncrowned king, who was so soon to be discrowned and discarded. This has been a perpetual difficulty in dealing with the misrepresentatives whom Ireland sometimes sends to Westminster. If an English politician of eminence talks to one of them seriously and with a desire for information, it is apt to be all communicated in hot haste to the London correspondent of the *Freeman's Journal* or the *Skibbereen Eagle*, as 'an English overture to our distinguished member' or 'a significant admission of English anxiety by a prominent statesman.' In the small competitions between the men of no importance, no advantage can be disdained. Lord Carnarvon might have chatted a score of times with Mr. Butt without the *Freeman's Journal* or the *Skibbereen Eagle* being the wiser by a hint. We have still the stuff of Butts and Grattans in Ireland, but you do not find them on the paysheets of the *Irish World*.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Barry O'Brien—*Life of Parnell*, ii. 95—admits the gross character of Parnell's conduct on this occasion, involving both complete misrepresentation and breach of honourable confidence. 'It is my personal belief that Mr. Parnell ought not for any party gain to have made public these strictly private negotiations'—not negotiations, but conversations. 'Mr. Parnell's fault was to make a positive assertion of what was a mere hypothesis, and to refer at all in public to transactions covered by an honourable confidence.' Parnell's mendacious invention has been fertile of similar falsehoods. It is part of the campaign of pseudo-Nationalist brag to represent both English parties competing for Parnellite patronage. Quite recently the paper, called by the unlovely name of *Ourselves—Sinn Féin*—had the effrontery to assert that 'in 1885, Mr. Gladstone appealed to the English and Scotch electorate to give him a majority sufficient to govern Ireland on coercive lines; and Mr. Gladstone's opponent, the Marquis of Salisbury, entered into negotiations with Mr. Parnell to grant

Although Mr. Gladstone, having resolved on the exclusion of the Irish members from Westminster, was engaged in converting his party, and though some few Conservatives might still think that Mr. Parnell had a consistent policy even of destruction, there was in the years 1884 and 1885 one thing which must be gone through by all parties before any constitutional revolution, beneficent or otherwise, could be approached from any side. This was electoral reform and redistribution. In the form in which the extension of the suffrage and the redistribution of seats passed into law for Ireland, the new electoral law ensured the triumph of the crudest Parnellism on the next consultation of the constituencies, but equally ensured the absolute destruction of the Parnellite supremacy at the first serious conflict between the uncrowned king and the real masters of the new electorate. Trebling the number of Irish voters, if it broadened the basis of Irish representation, as was fondly predicted and realised, really left Mr. Parnell without a reliable basis at all. The practical abolition of the urban representation made the rural voter, *or his master*, lord of Irish destiny in a parliamentary sense.

It is unnecessary to accumulate minutiae on the nature of the Franchise and Redistribution Acts in reference to Ireland. Instead of the 200,000 existing electors, mainly representing the middle and lower middle classes, who had refused to give Mr. Parnell, in spite of the £100,000 of the American money, more than one-fifth of the Irish representation at the last election in 1880, there were now to be 700,000 electors, mainly composed of the most uninstructed multitude to be found in Western Europe. In the eyes of these poor fellows prairie value and Home Rule meant simply a way to get much more comfortable with the least possible effort and expense. Not one in fifty, perhaps, could

Home Rule to Ireland in return for the support of the Irish vote in England and the support of the Irish party in England's Parliament.'

One reason for avoiding 'negotiation' with Mr. Parnell on Home Rule was that he had practically no convictions or programme about Home Rule, wobbling alternately or simultaneously towards Grattan's Parliament, Butt's Federal Home Rule, Devoy's Fenianism amended, and Gladstone's colonial sub-legislature.



tell what was Home Rule or what they were to do with it except to partition the land among the people. They had followed their local leaders in shouting for Parnell, boycotting indicated persons, earning the subventions of Mr. Patrick Egan and the Ladies' Land League ; and so long as the same local personages and the same one-pound notes were on the side of Parnell, they would be Parnellites still. Real independence, or real knowledge of the issues at stake, real comprehension of the difference between a national parliament and a mob convention they had none, and they have none to the present day. When to the evils of party competition for place are added the supremacy of ignorant numbers, then the existence of civilisation is threatened by the same crude appetites in Barcelona as in Paris, and in Paris as in Eatanswill or Ballyomadhan. We can hardly be surprised that the English rulers of Ireland, having given such power to such incompetence, look to the clergy to keep that incompetence in some sort of sheeplike order and acquiescence. The whole of the lesser boroughs being included in the counties under the new legislation, perhaps the shrewdest and most observant class of electors—small professional men, house owners, retired capitalists in a small way, semi-rural shopkeepers, and better artisans—were hopelessly swamped in the risen tide of the enfranchised bogtrotters and clodhoppers. Very fine material for many purposes were these same bogtrotters and clodhoppers, but as supreme authorities on public legislation and State government it might be possible to exaggerate their qualifications. Armagh was wiped out. Athlone was wiped out. Bandon was wiped out. Carlow was wiped out. Carrickfergus was wiped out. Coleraine was wiped out. Drogheda was wiped out. Downpatrick was wiped out. Dundalk, where the Parnellites had returned Sir Charles Russell to Parliament, was wiped out, and Sir Charles Russell, now on the road to the highest preferments, sought a London constituency. Dungarvan was wiped out. Historic Dungannon, sacred to the Volunteers of 1782, was wiped out. Ennis was wiped out. Enniskillen was wiped out.



Wiped out were Kinsale, Lisburn, New Ross, Wexford, Tralee, and Youghal. So many citadels and incarnations of history, so many landmarks of deeds and days which were in themselves a popular education, so many centres of quiet thought, ancestral prudence, healthy criticism, were all swept away and engulfed in mere peasantry and peasantry. Their loss meant far more to Ireland than it could possibly mean in England in cases of numerical similarity. But Mr. Chamberlain and Sir Charles Dilke ruled the ideas of the Liberal authorities on electoral reform, and the Parnellites, who cared nothing for culture, and who would have disfranchised the University of Dublin like a fishing village, and sooner, were jubilant over the coming supremacy of the Land League branches. They were soon to learn that the Land League branches, divorced from the immediate hope of gain after the old methods, and increasingly conscious that better things might come from Westminster than from Chicago, were quite capable of putting more confidence in the perpetual remaker of Land Acts than in Mr. Egan or Mr. Parnell. 'Parnell was grand at obstruction, but it was old Gladstone who gave new laws.' Of all the nominal and adulatory Parnellites who were to rise from the polls of 1885, hardly a dozen per cent. were to carry the tattered and bespattered banner of Parnellism through the very next election.

What was to me personally a droll but significant indication of the real nationalism of the Parnellite party occurred during the redistribution debates. As a Celt and a Celtic student of history I had obtained the sanction from both Sir Charles Dilke and Colonel King Harman, representing the Liberal and Tory parties, to revive in the new constituencies the names of some of the most famous of the place-names of Gaelic Ireland. I proposed, accordingly, a couple score of amendments: West Galway or the Connemara Division, South Cork or the Carbery Division, West Waterford or the Desies Division, North Tipperary or the Ormond Division, North Antrim or the Dunluce Division, East Down or the Ards Division, West Down or the Iveagh

Division, South Donegal or the Tirhugh Division, Mid Cork or the Muskery Division, North Derry or the Tircahan Division, West Wicklow or the Glenmalure Division. I sought to revive Thomond, and Desmond, and Ossory, Oriel and Massareene, Clondeboy and Oneilland. The united mass of the Parnellites rejected the ancient place-names. The nearest approach to an intelligible explanation which I could obtain for this ostracism of the Irish past was that many of the ancient names had become titles of Irish peers! I proposed that they should re-christen Leinster as there was a Duke of Leinster who had never gone on a collecting mission to America.

The Franchise and Redistribution Acts of 1884 and 1885 meant more, far more, to Ireland than even the swamping of an intelligent electorate in a blind flood of agrarian ignorance and appetite. It meant the end of all freedom of election and independent representation over three-fourths of the country. Given that ignorant mass of peasants, destitute of experience or initiative, and given also a vast organisation supported by an over-seas fund, all intelligent choice of candidates for Parliament would in any case be rare and difficult. When we have in addition certain peculiarities of the British electoral laws, made for England but applied to Ireland, we shall have, as will be seen, an absolute disfranchisement of the real electorate, and a systematic substitution of the caucus or convention for the suffrages of the constituency. Let us recall the facts of the British electoral law in its main features. In the first place, candidates are expected and required to bear all the expenses of consulting the electors, and the fundamental function of the Constitution must be performed at the cost of private and haphazard persons. In the second place, no matter what the malpractices which should render the election void as soon as the facts had been proved, the British State, which is ready to spend ten thousand pounds on the detection of a petty larceny or misdemeanour, will not even make a preliminary inquiry into the existence of the gravest of all offences against Parliament, unless a private



complainant has proffered a guarantee of £1000 to cover the expenses of setting the law in motion. In practice this means in England that anybody who wants to be able to enter political life in Parliament must, notwithstanding the notorious existence of the gravest electoral crimes confederated against the free choice of the voters, also be prepared to pay the expenses of public justice, or public justice will pass on the other side. 'No money no justice' is the marvellous motto of English law in reference to the detection and punishment of electoral crime.

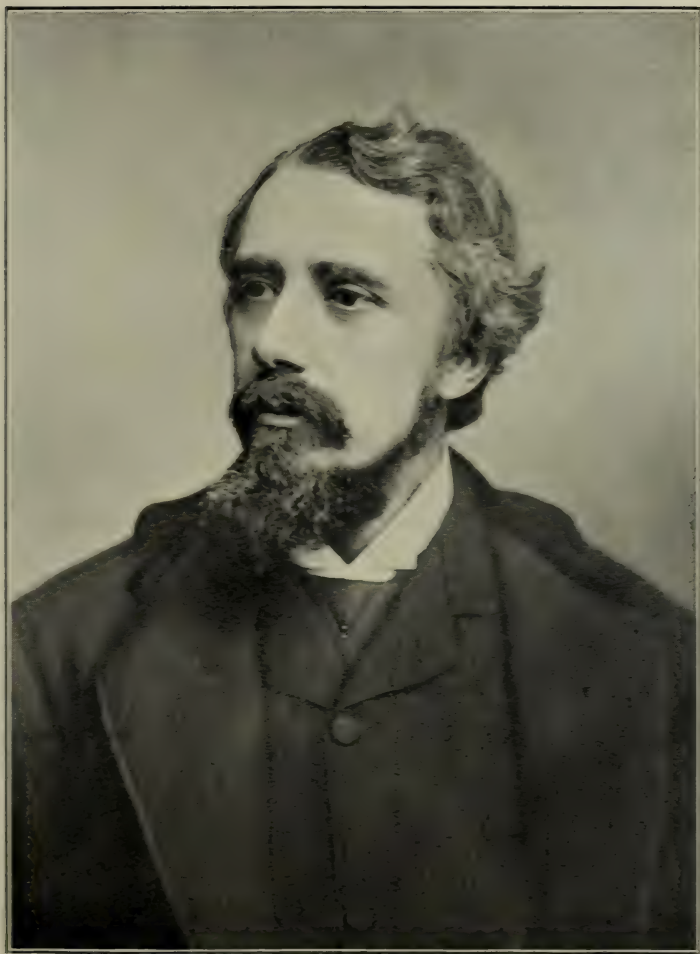
Money for opening the polls to the electorate, money for inquiring into frauds and outrages against the electorate and the freedom of election—this is an extraordinary conception of public functions of fundamental necessity. But at least in England there is money, and a wealthy candidate on one side can be opposed by a wealthy candidate on the other side, and money to induce justice to inquire into electoral malpractices will always be forthcoming in England, at least in the graver cases. In Ireland the circumstances are the opposite. The candidate of riches, whether the riches of an individual or the more dangerous riches of an organisation, can rarely be opposed by a candidate of corresponding resources. The crimes and malpractices committed by a wealthy organisation can rarely be investigated by men of sufficient wealth to enlist the coy assistance of public justice. The Parnellite League in 1885, armed with £150,000 sent by Ford and Co. from America, could find nowhere private candidates capable of resisting with private means the vast subsidies of Chicago and New York.

The more numerous and inexperienced and incompetent the mass of electors which the Election Acts of 1884 and 1885 placed upon the registers in Ireland, the more overwhelming was the superiority secured to the central organisation, with its army of agents and managers, which could employ scores of thousands of pounds of American money for the control of the constituencies and the overthrow of the independent candidates. Against the



comparative intelligence and independence of the electorate of 1880 the Tammany League could only return twenty-four Parnellites to Westminster out of the total Irish representation of 103. The admission of a more primitive and ignorant stratum of 500,000 new voters raised the Tammany total to eighty-five! Public deliberation was ended. Packed conventions reigned supreme. The subsidised press carried the right sort of views to the excited masses, who never had an opportunity of reading any other version of the happenings of the day. The cheap pages of *United Ireland*, under the influential proprietorship of Messrs. Parnell, Justin McCarthy, and Company, descended upon every rural household; and the peasantry learned, as a humorous contemporary put it, that 'Home Rule would abolish everything and give everybody five shillings a day.' Even the *Freeman's Journal*, that ancient organ of traditional and constitutional patriotism, had been compelled to obey the indications of the oligarchy. As was notorious, and as Edmund Dwyer Gray, the last proprietor, told me, Davitt had threatened to have the *Freeman* burned on a hundred platforms on the same day if it did not support the League. 'I could not afford to beggar my family by opposition or resistance. Davitt could put £100,000 of American money into an *Anti-Freeman*.' Everywhere it was the American money, blind, unreasoning, unlimited, which used the facilities of the electoral law to swamp the electorate and to annihilate the freedom of election.

The American money on the one hand, and Mr. Gladstone's progress in the conversion of the Liberal party; these were the two dominant influences of Mr. Parnell's situation as the sands of the Parliament of 1880 were running out. The extraordinary importance, not more extraordinary than important, which Parnell most correctly attached to the American money was dramatically revealed in a couple of incidents of this interval. On April 25, 1883, an immense General Convention of the American branches of organisations supporting Parnellism and its offshoots and alliances assembled in Philadelphia; and the various bodies



*Photo: Wm. Lawrence]*

EDMUND DWYER GRAY, M.P.  
*Proprietor of the Freeman's Journal*





represented by its delegates had been naturally desirous of seeing once more in their midst the uncrowned king of many memories. He had not been among them since he had signed the compact of Kilmainham and engaged to promote Liberal principles in Ireland ; and at first there had been stormy comments upon this act of submission or condescension. The matter was satisfactorily explained by the Irish News Agency as really amounting to the submission of Mr. Gladstone rather than Mr. Parnell ; and an enthusiastic welcome was promised the member for Cork if he trod once more an American platform. But, as I have pointed out, Mr. Parnell considered himself bound to Mr. Gladstone to the extent of refraining from excesses of conduct himself, however expedient an occasional excess might be in the case of his lieutenants. To their great regret the Convention of Philadelphia received a lengthy telegram of excuses and explanations from Mr. Parnell, in which he expressed the profundity of his sorrow at being unable to quit his duties in the enemy's Parliament for the invigorating presence of the generous exiles in the great Republic. As a matter of fact, as we know from the London correspondent of Devoy's *Nation* at New York, the coming or staying of the chief had been acutely discussed between himself and his councillors, and it had been finally determined that in the circumstances it would be too risky to face the Philadelphia Convention. The reasons were simple and convincing. A powerful party, including the paymasters-general of the League, were openly collecting and organising for a dynamite campaign in England. Mr. Patrick Ford, ' that household name in Ireland,' as Mr. John Redmond affectionately styled him at the party banquet in 1908, was enrolling ' the 50 Irishmen ' who were to lay London in ashes ' on some night of high winds.' If Mr. Parnell were to approve the proceedings of these zealous friends, it would never do for his position in Parliament. If he were to stigmatise Ford and Co., what about the dollars ? As the London correspondent of the Devoy organ wrote to New York, ' it would be no easy task to argue before an

Irish-American audience that the use of force by Ireland, or by any other oppressed nation, would be immoral.' Parnell preferred to follow an 'easier' course. He would not denounce the indiscriminate dynamiting of English crowds, the indiscriminate arson of English cities; but he would beg the friends of force of this description not to talk too loud about their predilections in sending the cheques to him and his merry men. In the words of his telegram to the exiles at Philadelphia, April 25, 1883: 'I would respectfully advise that your platform be so framed as to enable us to continue to be able to accept help from America, and at the same time to avoid offering a pretext to the British Government for entirely suppressing the national movement in Ireland.' 'Pretext' is good. 'National movement'—Ford and Egan movement—is even better. At this interesting point it has occurred to the sympathetic author of the 'Life of Parnell,' ii. 32, to ask and answer an interesting question: 'But what did Parnell think of the morality of dynamite? He did not think about it at all.' So writes Mr. Barry O'Brien. But this statement is a slight exaggeration. Parnell did think about dynamite to the extent of asking the dynamiters not to mention their favourite topic in connexion with their cash remittances.

While Mr. Parnell and the Convention of the League at Philadelphia were exchanging felicitations and expectations, I was cutting the last connexions with the Irish Parliamentary party. I had never accepted the Land League or supported Parnell's assault on the old constitution of the Home Rule party, but I had acknowledged him as sessional chairman, when he had been elected in an election in which I took no part. The feckless and foolish unconstitutionality of the Gladstone-Forster system of arrest on suspicion had brought me to defend Land Leaguers and tenant righters without inquiring into their particular tenets. It was necessary to defend common liberties against an insane and irritating impolicy of bastilles *pour rive*. At Stafford and Derry I had helped Mr. Parnell's friends with the aid of the Conservative party, which naturally declined to

admire either Mr. Gladstone's government by *lettre de cachet* or his amnesties under arrangement. While all the Land League members of note were either in jail or beyond the sea, I had led the fight against coercion from Inishowen to Essex, and Mr. McCarthy and I represented the united parliamentarians when Mr. Parnell came from Kilmainham to Willesden. When the National League was founded, I felt bound to exhibit a desire for the co-operation of all Irishmen. Very soon I found that the National League was as factious as its predecessor, notwithstanding the happy blend of the *Irish World's* exchequer and a Downing Street alliance. The amiable Bill of Mr. Justin McCarthy, M.P., to establish an Irish secretaryship of state in the British Cabinet for Mr. Parnell exhausted my faculty for wonder and settled my remaining hesitations, and I determined to quit without delay this bewildering agapemone of ministerial patronage and Transatlantic explosives. Henceforth I was to be more than ever the philosophic observer of one of the most extraordinary combinations of the heads of an established Government and the stipendiaries of an established conspiracy which has ever adorned ancient or modern history.

Something still more unprecedented than the diplomatic telegram to separate finance from massacre by watertight compartments was to occur in connexion with the actual campaign of dynamite bombs which followed the Philadelphia Convention. A whole series of dastardly abominations occurred through 1883 and 1884. The explosion of an infernal machine at Victoria Station would have caused ghastly murder of men, women, and children if it had happened at a crowded hour. But the events of January 1884 constituted what American terseness of expression might designate the limit. On the 24th of that month serious explosions of bombs had taken place in the Tower of London and in the House of Commons. In both places parties of ladies, young girls, and children narrowly escaped horrible mutilation. Only two days later Mr. Parnell, on January 26, addressed a large meeting in the



County Clare. He denounced some obnoxious officials. He denounced the taking of evicted lands by farmers. He piously intimated that the farmer who gave back land from which a tenant had been evicted would cause the joy in heaven which holy writ had promised on the conversion of even one sinner. He uttered not a single word to condemn the cowardly atrocities which were making the name of Ireland stink in the nostrils of Europe. Shortly afterwards I asked him point-blank why he had not spoken against the outrages in his Clare speech immediately afterwards. 'I was really not thinking of them,' he replied. Not for the first time I came to the conclusion that there was something defective as well as cynical in his mental constitution, something which had developed with evil intercourse, something which had been promoted and encouraged by the apparent unreality of the attitude of a large number of members of the British Commons towards him and his proceedings. 'They do not care what we do or what we say provided they think that they can make use of us.' This was one of his forms of appreciation. By 'they' he meant above all the members and the party whose 'Liberal principles' he had promised to promote. The Conservatives seemed to him to offer no material for more than occasional co-operation. With the Liberals he believed he could count on permanent arrangements, 'if they thought that it would be worth their while.' He always professed to hold them as indifferent to moral distinctions as he appeared to be himself. Frankly speaking, this was not the Parnell whom I used to know and like half a dozen years before. His constant illnesses, his habitual condition of nervous exhaustion, often, I am convinced, limited the perceptions of a mind always more acute than comprehensive. But, above all, he had grown to believe that utility and not honesty was the guiding star of English politics. I continued to observe him. I continued to feel a sort of pity for him. But the bitterness of his contempt for the motives of men often sounded like the laugh of a lost soul. Perhaps he despised his colleagues more than he

did the English. Except when he was under Mrs. O'Shea's eyes and influence, he must have been a terribly and appallingly unhappy man. I do not wish to be understood as entertaining a high idea of English political honesty, as exhibited in the combinations and objects of a vast deal of party politics in England, any more than in other countries of similar conditions. But I have known dozens of Englishmen and Scotsmen in Parliament, often to my mind impracticable and hostile, but the very soul of honour. There were plenty of others. But Parnell grew every year deeper and deeper in the conviction that all men, especially English Liberals, were devoid of every motive but sordid expediency. And yet all his own inmost convictions were Liberal, so far as his self-willed self-glorification, which also increased from year to year, allowed even his Liberalism to govern his actions. He was not going to fall out with his dynamite paymasters for the sake of conciliating Englishmen. Englishmen would themselves feel that it would be asking too much to sacrifice solid advantages to sentimental considerations. If he were to denounce outrage and lose the subsidies of the outrage-mongers, the English would only laugh at his want of political shrewdness. As this developed Parnell, this Parnell who had been educated by those with whom he had come into closest contact, came more and more under my scrutiny, I felt more sure than ever that he possessed no single element of permanent success or beneficent statesmanship. This man, I said to myself, is corroded. He cannot last. He might have lived to the end of many years as a gallant and fearless subordinate. Adulation had been fatal. A restorer of Irish freedom to fail to denounce a cowardly campaign of massacre and mutilation! He or such as he could never restore Irish freedom.

Nor could the English politicians, who made no account of such baseness in their arrangements of terms of alliance, always carry out their sorry engagements. There was no doubt that numbers of those members of the House, while loudly condemning Parnell's attitude of indifference towards crime, really regarded it as a sort of superiority. They

were ready to take his cynicism as an earnest of his power. While clean and kindly Irishmen, devoted to the ancient ideals and actuated by the ancient pride, were sneeringly nicknamed, even by the leader of the House, as Nominal Home Rulers, the pensioner and payee of the atrocious employers of all those brutish caricatures of Irish nature, who were being sent to penal servitude by the public tribunals, seemed actually to numbers of smug and respected politicians to be on a higher level in proportion to his lower policy.

Let me repeat, as a matter of the utmost moment in this connexion, the deliberate conviction that Charles Stewart Parnell was not the nature which could bear without serious alteration the bewildering vicissitudes of the career which had been thrust upon him. What an ascent from the 'bit of a county gentleman' whom Mr. Matthew Harris had selected as leader, and whose first amendments had been drafted for his incompetence by Mr. Sheridan Knowles of the *Morning Post*, to the mysterious autocrat, the veiled prophet, whom a Prime Minister had marked as his colleague in the recasting of the British Constitution ! And he had done absolutely nothing but follow the suggestions of Davitt, and Devoy, and Egan ; had never propounded a policy ; had never kept a friend ; had uttered in turn every changing shibboleth of changing majorities—Butt's Home Rule, Devoy's New Departure, prairie value, no-rent, Liberal principles, Grattan's Parliament ; and had been acclaimed with hysterical enthusiasm from the Atlantic to the Pacific ; had been accorded the floor of the American Congress ; had entered into a compact of alliance with a British Premier ; had gone up like a rocket ! At a comparatively early stage of his meteoric flight, he had been carefully noted and judged by one of the keenest of European observers, who had summed him up in a word : 'C'est un megalomane.' The same keen observer was to examine him in the desperate hours when he was raging and striking blindly at 'the sweeps,' 'the gutter-sparrows' ; and the final, sad verdict was : 'C'est un megalomane



crevé.' A swelled head, and a swelled head burst ! Parnell had such absolute control over his party ! Yes, till it left him in the lurch. Yes, so long as it was a party of poor, poor men ; picked from desks and counters where they were earning 30s. a week ; dependent on Biggar's doles from Egan's treasury. No, when the poor, poor men had utilised the opportunity, had made money at the Land Court bar, in prosperous journalism, by the public subscription. The shiftless penny-a-liner who was ready, in the phrase of Mr. William O'Brien, to black Mr. Parnell's boots while he only kept body and soul together with Mr. Parnell's £5 notes, was able and willing to expel his maker from the chair when the quondam bootblack had £17,000 to his account in a first-class bank.

A shape of lath and plaster had seemed a leader there ;  
With puppetry and paintwork to make the people stare.  
There came a wind of judgment, and lo ! the place was bare.

The fall of the Gladstone Ministry in June 1885 was a necessary preliminary to Mr. Gladstone's conversion of his party. The combined efforts of the Fourth party and the Third party, to place them in the order of their effective action, had wrecked the reputation of the Cabinet long before the temptation and the moment for the stroke of doom had arrived. But though Mr. Gladstone must fall with his ministry, it was only Lord Randolph Churchill and his choice spirits who meant and felt that the sooner Mr. Gladstone's reign ended, the more definite it would be. The Irish benches cheered the overthrow of many a pompous or perky ministerialist. No men of light and leading in the Parnellite ranks desired or believed that the Grand Old Man would not rise again. Meantime the affair was simply magnificent for rightly impressing the Irish electorate and the American pay-chest. Here was ocular demonstration that, as Mr. Sexton or Mr. Justin McCarthy has said, 'the Parnellites held the Empire in the hollow of their hand.' They had overthrown a British Government—on a question of the taxation of beer and spirits, it is true—

on an amendment moved by the Tory Hicks-Beach, and in the absence, or abstention, from the Gladstone Government of no less than seventy-six Liberals, while the majority against that Government had been only twelve. If the seventy-six Liberals had stood to their colours, the thirty-nine members associated with Mr. Parnell could not have prevented the Gladstone Ministry from triumphing by the great majority of sixty-four votes. Neither the proud enthusiasts in Sackville Street nor the American contributors were invited to dwell upon these modifying facts. It was agreed that 'Parnell had smashed the Saxon Government,' and that he only wanted a steady and ensured flow of hundreds of thousands of dollars in order to win Home Rule. All the time the Liberals were also taught by a score of subtle agencies to resent the perpetual intrusion of Irish votes into the settlement of British affairs, and Mr. Gladstone's conviction that the Irish must go became a sheet-anchor of the coming policy of the bulk of the Liberal party. A Salisbury Government came in, merely to appeal to the country. There was no chance of a Liberal majority largely surpassing Conservatives and Parnellites in combination. As events turned out, Parnell could give a majority of a few units in alliance with the Conservatives against the Liberals; but in case of an arrangement between Mr. Gladstone and the gentleman who refused to condemn dynamite, there would be, if everything held, a Parnello-Gladstonian host of 421 against 249 Conservatives. If the Irish could be totally excluded from the Imperial Parliament on any show of nominal Home Rule, the Liberals might comfortably dominate Britain and the Empire with a solid majority of eighty-six over the unaided Tories. It was quite a tempting opportunity for the conversion of a party.

Mr. Gladstone hastened ingenuously to declare that the manner in which Parnellism had swept the Irish board at the election—85 supporters out of a possible 103—left no alternative to a Liberalism worthy of its principles but to bow before this august manifestation of the will of a nation. The old parliamentary hand forgot to

mention how the august manifestation had been bought, and browbeaten, and gerrymandered. The campaign of the American dollar in Ireland in 1885 had been planned and executed on the finest models of Tammany or the San Francisco Grafters. The raw material of the transaction was the raw mass of the five hundred thousand new voters, virgin pages to be inscribed as per order. The methods were: (1) the Tammany war-chest, (2) the Tammany carpet-bagger, (3) the League stalwarts, and, above all, (4) the working of the British electoral law as applied to a country destitute of British electoral conditions. From end to end of Ireland every independent Nationalist candidate must pay out of his private and modest resources the whole costs of the contested election and the possible election petition. In every constituency the Tammany war-chest provided the carpet-baggers of the League, without a penny to their cost, with the hundreds or the thousands of pounds sterling necessary to swamp the electorate and drown out the opposition. The daisies on a lawn side would have about as much chance of holding up their independence against a steam-roller. Consultation of the Irish nation! The thing was impossible. Almost everywhere there was not even a contest, except against some silly supporters of silly landlordism, who, to decuple their certainty of extinction, had thoughtfully labelled themselves as Unionists as well as landlords. The institution of the Tammany carpet-bagger was a systematic operation. Hardly any constituency was wooed by a local Parnellite. The sprig of shillelagh was imported from some distant county. In this way, no local affections nor preferences would ever limit the omnipotence of the Tammany over its puppets. That was the 'supreme demonstration' of the will of a nation which had poured out of the cornucopia of Messrs. Ford, Finnerty, Devoy, reinforced since the trial of the Invincibles by the venomous and prudent Pat Egan, the treasurer-general of everything in the way of a league, from the autumn of 1879, when the Land League was founded, till the spring of 1883, when James Carey turned



Queen's evidence. Then Egan fled. He was now on the Bowery of New York, and would soon be United States Minister to President Balmaceda of Chili. In presence of the supreme demonstration it has been agreed ever since that the exponents of Gladstonian Liberalism should wag applauding and reverential hands. 'As a supreme electoral demonstration,' says Lord Morley, 'the Irish elections of 1885 have never been surpassed in any country.' Lord Morley had not a word to say of the Tammany war-chest, of the overwhelming disabilities of independent candidates, compelled under British electoral laws to fight with their scanty private means the organised dollars of the Irish-American Continent. Did Irish America only want Gladstonian Home Rule? Would Lord Morley agree that the Irish-American editor's estimate of Gladstonian Home Rule as 'the plant of an armed revolution' was a satisfactory tribute to the constitution-tinkering ability of the Liberal Premier? I am a mere historian. I am a mere exponent of facts. My exposition, based on intimate knowledge, of Gladstonian Home Rule does not prevent my respectful recognition of Mr. Gladstone's supreme merit as the great author in England of a just recognition of the hopeless imbecility of the Unionist solution of the Irish problem. Since that November day of the year 1873—when I had announced to the Home Rule Conference that there must soon be an end of the Act of Union, bag and baggage, after the adoption of a resolute policy by Nationalist Ireland of 'interference by the Irish members in English affairs so long as the English members interfered in Irish affairs'—the Unionist solution was as dead as Queen Anne. Mr. Gladstone provided no real substitute. Mr. Gladstone saw that Unionism was dead and rotten, and he clothed his conviction in words of golden sympathy with Ireland's wrong which no Irish Nationalist need ever fail to peruse with real pleasure, even though Ireland had no benefit. Twelve years only had passed since I expounded the active policy which had been ripened in the trained meditations of the three Irish journalists of

the *Morning Post*, and already the traditions of the British Parliament lay around my feet in ruins. The Continental closure had come; but the Irish difficulty was still the dominant factor of the parliamentary situation.

The scandalous incident at the Galway election was already a revelation that not only was there impudent and confident mutiny in Parnell's party, but that Parnell possessed no art of command against the grossest assailants of his authority and insulters of his honour. As I have already intimated, whatever were the more intimate relations between Parnell and Mrs. O'Shea, in all conventional regards the friendship was entirely discreet and becoming. Mr. Parnell was the friend of the family. Captain O'Shea, who certainly would countenance no detected misconduct, was deeply attached to Parnell, and approved of all the care which always surrounded the visit of a man whose state of extreme bad health required every care. If Mrs. O'Shea was already Parnell's love, at any rate she was his sister of mercy. She even brought him to the great surgeon Sir Henry Thompson, in all probability for treatment of the renal affection which had always menaced him, and which was now become a danger to his life. I cannot too strongly condemn and denounce the abominable libel and slander that Captain O'Shea was the accomplice of his own dishonour. Any husband who had Parnell for a friend might have had every latent suspicion disarmed by the constant illness of the distinguished guest between the years 1883 and, we may even say, the year of his death. An exceptionally competent witness, an Irish retired serjeant of the London City Police, had devoted six weeks, he told me, to a detective observation of the lives of Parnell and the O'Sheas.

If he does not love her, at any rate she worships him; but it may be all innocent love and fondness. Mr. Parnell is a great invalid, and he is afraid of being recognised by the English mob all the time. The O'Sheas are goodness itself, and I think that poor Mr. Parnell is in want of everything that they can do for him. He is a lonely creature without them.

Of course, such relations of care and helplessness have often been accompanied by passion. But there was absolutely no ground but gossip for the abominable attacks made by a pair of mutineers upon Parnell and his two friends in the Galway election. What man's reputation in any country would be safe, if, without proof or with proof, fellows were to rush through the streets shouting the name of some lady, asserting that her favours were the price of her husband's promotion or distinction? This was what was done at Galway. Biggar dared to say to the Catholic bishop himself: 'Parnell is just making a convenience of Galway. He wants the membership for O'Shea to pay him for letting his wife be Parnell's mistress.' Five years of Land Leaguering had brutalised Biggar beyond recognition. He used to be able, though vulgar. Now he was brutal and stupid. But the extraordinary thing was Parnell himself. Had he been the lover of Mrs. O'Shea a thousand times over, he need not have taken the vilest insults quite so tamely. Parnell merely called upon his party to support his authority, and told them, in strict confidence, that Mr. Gladstone had personally promised him Home Rule, and that anything which shook his authority might delay Home Rule! What an attitude and what an appeal for the masterful man of whom the legend goes! The lieutenants of this figure-head Napoleon were already arbiters of the situation. They were no longer the unknown recruits whom Egan and Davitt brought from their 30s. a week to be members of Parliament on £400 a year from America. Captain O'Shea was frantic with rage. He cut Parnell, and the Divorce Court was already in sight.

When Parnell invoked the support of his followers against atrocious outrage by the assurance that Mr. Gladstone had promised him Home Rule, he did more than betray his own feebleness and dependence. He practically bound himself to accept anything which Gladstone might call Home Rule. To provoke Mr. Gladstone into offering nothing would have snapped the last strand of the Parliamentary party's remaining allegiance to



their uncrowned king. No more Grattan's Parliament, and no more of the pledge, only renewed a year ago, that 'nothing less than Grattan's Parliament would be accepted by Ireland.' Parnell must now declare that he liked exceedingly any Gladstonian patent for any sort of Home Rule whatever. Events could not but march rapidly. The Salisbury Cabinet went out on the horns of the cow which Mr. Jesse Collings brought to graze in the three acres of the agricultural labourer. Mr. Gladstone returned to the premiership and named to the Irish Secretaryship Mr. John Morley, who had recently pronounced openly for 'the relief of the parliamentary burden by the removal of the Irish members, who weakened our policy, upset ministries, and rejected Bills for reasons which British opinion could not recognise as patriotic in any English sense.' The keynote of Gladstonian Home Rule was now struck beyond mistaking. It was not to restore Grattan's Parliament to Ireland, but to expel the troublesome Irishmen from Pitt's Parliament, that the Grand Old Man had become so deeply and hotly convinced of 'the blackguardliness of the Union.' I had had enough of Home Rulers of the Ford and Egan brand. I had declined to present myself before any constituency. But I exerted every effort, and addressed myself to every ally, in order to wreck the arrangement which I knew was on the stocks. Parnell's men who had broken Butt should never be allowed to sell the sovereign rights of Ireland for any sub-colonial sub-legislature. And I knew, besides, that the scheme was hopelessly unworkable.

The Gladstonian Home Rule was a performance which had an extremely short run; and it was hardly announced before it was removed from the boards, which involved the substitution of a new company as well as a new programme; the latter, of course, old. It was on April 8, 1886, that Mr. Gladstone arose to explain the provisions of a Bill which, like the Land Acts, he had invented himself, and which, like the Land Acts, could only be final in the sense of putting an end to the very dream of finality.

Amid the innumerable anomalies of the whole affair, it seemed to have struck hardly anybody that this Bill, which was professedly a measure of self-government for Ireland, had never been laid before the public opinion of Ireland ; that its heads had been merely communicated to a few foreign-subsidised politicians, whose 'steps had been dogged' by very unlovely happenings in Ireland and elsewhere, and who had been recently elected by the exercise of all the pressure which the vast hoard of Ford-and-Egan money was enabled to exercise in a poor country, absolutely destitute of popular candidates capable of supporting the expenses of a contest against the dollars from a score of states of the American Union. Without consulting a single free meeting in Ireland upon his project, the venerable Premier rose to explain his proposal. He did not, indeed, intend to refer it to the free opinion of the Irish nation even after revealing it to publicity at Westminster. Though the general election in Ireland, as elsewhere, had been concluded in absolute ignorance of Mr. Gladstone's plan, Mr. Gladstone intended that the plan should become law without any opportunity for Ireland to express any opinion whatever. If he could get a majority in the British Parliament, he intended to take no account of Irish constituencies which had elected, or been made to elect, their members of Parliament without the slightest inkling of what Mr. Gladstone would be about. While denouncing the work of Pitt and Castlereagh at the Union, Mr. Gladstone conscientiously copied the procedure of Pitt and Castlereagh. As Lord Rosebery, in his 'Life of Pitt,' has reminded Englishmen, Pitt and Castlereagh laid their Bill of Union before an Irish Parliament whose electors had never seen the Bill. Mr. Gladstone was now laying his Irish Sub-Legislature Bill before a Parliament whose electors—the Irish as well as the British—had never seen the Bill. The Scottish Union in 1707 had been bad enough, as Lord Rosebery admits. But Gladstone's Bill, like the Pitt and Castlereagh business, out-heroded the Scottish Union.

The Parliament that passed the Scottish Union in 1707 had been elected directly in view of that question, which entirely engrossed the national mind. The Parliament that in 1800 passed the Irish Union had been elected with no more reference to the question of the termination of its own existence than to free education or female suffrage.

The Parliament on which Mr. Gladstone sprang his suggestion had been elected with no more reference to a sub-colonial sub-legislature for Ireland than to the dispute between Dr. Cook and Commander Peary about the North Pole. As far as the Irish electorate was concerned, indeed, the latest fact on the national question which it can be considered to have had before it was Mr. Parnell's solemn declaration, only a year before, that 'Grattan's Parliament was the least thing Ireland could accept.'

The actual operations of the Gladstonian Bill were simple and astounding :—

All Irish representatives were to be excluded from the Westminster Parliament. Mr. Gladstone wanted a free hand for England.

More than a third of the Irish revenue was to be held and administered by the British Parliament without, as aforesaid, any representatives of the Irish taxpayers.

Both the Upper and the Lower Houses of the Grattan Parliament were to be abolished in favour of a one-chamber assembly, consisting of 103 members chosen on a plutocratic franchise, and 206 members chosen by the Land League constituencies. Twenty-eight Irish peers were to adulterate the purity of the plutocratic class till the twenty-eight were dead. Afterwards there should be no more.

As a guarantee for property and order, the plutocratic 103 could insist on voting as a separate order for three years. Afterwards only numbers would count, and property and order were to be permanently guaranteed by the unchecked supremacy of the 206 Land Leaguers.



Trade, Customs, Foreign and Colonial policy, the Army and the Navy were to be entirely controlled and administered by the British Parliament, without representation or influence on the part of Ireland. Ireland was to pay for the Empire and the Colonies, was to fight for every question of Imperial and Colonial policy on any side which it pleased England to take, but Ireland was to have neither vote nor voice on the matters for which her citizens were to pay and her soldiers to die. Ireland was to be as subject and submissive as Jamaica or Barbadoes, but was to have none of the exemptions from Imperial burdens which other crown colonies enjoyed.

In all disputed matters the English Privy Council was to decide. The claim of the English Privy Council to limit Irish policy had loaded the muskets and the cannon of the Volunteers of 1782.

There was also a Land Bill, which need not be mentioned because it was still-born. Such was the sub-colonial sub-legislature which the cogitations of Mr. Gladstone and his intense detestation of Irish interference at Westminster proposed to substitute for the historic Parliament of the Irish nation. Mr. Parnell, whatever his desire, had no power to withstand the mounting Gladstonianism of his followers. The Parnellite Parliamentary party might have followed Mr. Gladstone on the Sub-Legislature Bill in 1886, as they followed him on the divorce affair three short years later. When Parnell met his party now, he knew, and every man knew, that he had been grossly, contemptuously outraged and insulted by two of his leading lieutenants at Galway, that he had not dared to punish them, that the party had been content to hush the scandal up somewhat, that he had only obtained that partial and halting respite in return for a declaration that 'he held an Irish Parliament in his hand if they did nothing to weaken his authority.' The party liked the Sub-Legislature

Bill immensely. 'Whisht, man, whisht! Before twelve months we'll be handling millions a year.' There was a great deal of balm for a sub-colonial position in that consideration. The Irish bishops also were warmly in favour of Mr. Gladstone's Bill. There was no nonsense of a real Irish Parliament about it. The estated classes, the Irish lords of Parliament, the Fenians and other Nationalists, were nicely excluded by it. The plutocratic 'Order' would be extinguished in three years. After that brief interval, the 206 members for the League constituencies, having at the most only 103 plutocrats to oppose them, would control all the legislation, all the taxes, all the salaried situations; and the late general election—the first election by the 500,000 small voters—had already shown that the short eclipse of clerical power since Butt's Home Rule was almost passed away. In Lord Morley's 'Life of Gladstone' there is a sufficiently informing glimpse of what the clergy had already done in 1885.

It was all done, vowed the Tories, by the bishops and clergy; they were indefatigable; they canvassed at the houses and presided at meetings; they exhorted their flocks from the altar, and they drilled them at the polling-booths. The spiritual screw of the priest and the temporal screw of the League—there was the whole secret. Such was the story, and it was not wholly devoid of truth.

At the next general election, when Parnell himself was fighting for his life against those same energetic churchmen, the electoral rehearsal of 1885 was followed by a serious effort which has settled the question of priest or layman in politics down to this day. Unquestionably the Gladstonian sub-legislature would have suited the political priesthood to a T. They would have 'utilised everything and occupied everything' in the manner, and to the effect, demanded by considerations immeasurably more lofty than mere interests of human honour and national progress. It is, properly considered, the glory of the Catholic clergy in politics to postpone all terrestrial considerations to the advancement of a spiritual ideal. As a great Irish cleric

of the Gaelic ages of long ago, the sainted Aengus the Culdee, had already sung in his famous Litany :

Fallen is the pride of the High Kings,  
 Fallen the palaces of Erin ;  
 But famous are the blessed Churches,  
 The way of the Saints is famous.

The glory of Tara is waste and desolation,  
 The Throne of Leinster is broken ;  
 But pilgrims throng to Clonmacnois,  
 And Patrick's Ardmacha is the seat of thanksgiving.

I had not been for nothing twenty years in Irish politics, and I made use of every channel of access to every sort of influence which could finish or impede the sub-legislature. I found at Lausanne, where I was yachting on the entrancing lake, excellent composers and printers—such as might not readily be excelled in Dublin—and I sent circulars in every direction, pointing out the innumerable objections to the measure from every point of view. To the Nationalist I drew the contrast with Grattan's Parliament. To the Imperialist I pointed out that such a sorry caricature of self-government must irritate every true Irish patriot, and while there was no protection for the Irish minority in a single-chamber convention, it was impossible for Irishmen in the long-run to pay tribute to an empire in which they were not even represented. My circulars were in a thousand hands before, or as soon as, the first reading debate was closed. I have a piquant pleasure in reproducing one of Mr. Chamberlain's replies to my action, for I have never concealed my opinion that this statesman, who has been the worst abused of all the men who contributed to destroy the sub-colonial impossibility, played the very best part for Ireland on that occasion. After acknowledging my letter 'with its enclosure,' Mr. Chamberlain, writing on May 22, 1886—the important date which marked the formal formation of the Liberal Unionist organisation in reply to the National Liberal Association's extrusion of followers of the member for Birmingham—went on to



acknowledge the 'interesting and suggestive' nature of the evidence I had placed in his hands, adding these words which went to the heart of the matter: 'I cannot understand how the majority of Irishmen should be willing to abandon altogether the principle which a few years ago found universal favour with the supporters of Home Rule.' The evening before, Mr. Justin McCarthy had been put up to assure the House that the proposed sub-legislature 'would not be one of politicians, but of earnest practical men careful only to restore the prosperity of Ireland'! And eighty-five carpet-baggers, carefully divorced from all connexion with their constituencies, illustrated the 'earnest practical' character of the 206 League nominees who would distribute the salaries and emoluments under the budget of £6,000,000 left to the discretion of the Ford-and-Egan stipendiaries.

The sub-colonial sub-legislature for Ireland was thrown out. Lord Salisbury took the place of Mr. Gladstone, and Mr. Gladstone returned to share with Mr. Parnell the relaxations of opposition. The battle had been fought on the Irish side with great cleverness and much eloquence by Sir Charles Russell, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Healy, and Mr. T. P. O'Connor. No new talent seemed to have been developed among the new carpet-baggers, though the ranks of Mr. Parnell's more or less devoted followers had now risen to fourfold the total of the members who had voted for the sessional chairmanship of Parnell in place of Mr. Shaw after the election of 1880. Lord Morley recognises with satisfaction that no less than twenty-two of the new Parnellite members 'had been imprisoned under the Act of 1881.' Their martyrdom had raised them to the House of Commons and a Ford-and-Egan salary without revealing any intellectual distinction. From politics the Gladstonian Parnellites, excepting Parnell himself, now turned to picnics. Deputations of Irish mayors and mayoresses lunched at Hawarden. Deputations of earnest Liberals visited Ireland, were cheered in the Dublin Rotunda, and dined in the Dublin Mansion House. There were some touching shows of Nonconformist ministers clasping the hands of Catholic

priests on public platforms. The lion was making believe to lie down with the lamb—for the sake of historical impartiality I do not specify which was the lamb—and ‘denominationalism in the school’ was strictly avoided on these consolatory occasions. The enthusiastic description of the singing of ‘God save Ireland’ by the Lord Mayor of Dublin and the English Liberal deputation, communicated to the sympathetic columns of the *Daily News* by the Reverend John Page Hopps, was one of the finest contributions towards the immortality of these proceedings.

Parnell took as little part as possible in the junketings and kissing-bees of this union of hearts. If he liked his followers less at any time more than another, it was when they were being shown off to the guests of English country houses and the crowds at English demonstrations. He became perfectly savage at being obliged to make a show of himself. He was pestered by hostesses, worried by ex-Cabinet ministers, driven to distraction by would-be deputations. All these men had howled with delight when he had been arrested and imprisoned without trial or sentence, when his health had been permanently ruined, and when he had been forced into promiscuities which he loathed to recall. The fact that the martyrdom had suited his book at the moment was no exculpation of the men who had laid hands on him. I think that because Parnell was at heart a Liberal, being indeed unable to understand Conservatism at all, he felt more bitterly having had the rights of man and, what was more serious, the rights of a gentleman, outraged in his case. I do not believe that he ever liked Mr. Gladstone after Kilmainham. He used to be quite enthusiastic about him at the opening of the Bradlaugh affair. I had diagnosed Parnell’s pride from the very outset of our comradeship of long ago as giving him the endurance and defiance which suited the active policy. Parnell had the pride of Lucifer, and a little more. He had assimilated every word of adulation which had been offered before him, and he was convinced that he was very nearly everything, and had made nearly everybody. He resented

the compact of Kilmainham. He resented Gladstone's insistence upon Gladstonian Home Rule. He knew that he had to accept Gladstone's edition of the Irish claim, and he resented it. Anybody who reads with sufficient thoughtfulness Lord Morley's account of the negotiations on the Bill between Gladstone and Parnell—book ix, chaps. v, vi, and vii of the 'Life'—will recognise the profound distrust with which Parnell regarded the measure. It shocked his best, his family, traditions. In his Wicklow home he had the banners of Irish Volunteer regiments who had mustered to break down English claims infinitely less arrogant than the claims embodied in the Sub-Legislature Bill. The description in Lord Morley's words, 'Parnell courteous enough, but depressed and gloomy,' feebly expresses the storm which then swept Parnell's soul. But for his Gladstonian lieutenants Parnell would have been far more 'gloomy' for the Bill. Now the Bill was dead, and the Liberals wanted to make a show of himself! I believe that Lady Jeune, sympathetic, full of exquisite tact, was almost the only English hostess to whose house Parnell went with willingness and pleasure. But, after all, Parnell was desperately ill, though still, I believe, capable of cure with proper restraint and mode of life; and this condition of things profoundly affected Parnell's chances of ever coping with the difficulties which his Kilmainham compact was closing around him. He could have made himself more, far more, the master of the situation than ever, but his growing lack of physical ability accentuated the absence of original decision and statesmanship which his early canonisation as popular hero concealed from all the superficial world. He fell more and more under the protecting tutelage of his intellectual, charming, and adoring friend, Mrs. O'Shea. An extract, a single extract from a statement made by the great surgeon, Sir Henry Thompson, to Mr. Barry O'Brien with regard to the condition of Mr. Parnell at this very time, will throw more light over the closing scenes of Parnell's decline and fall than volumes of speculation.



Parnell first called on me on November 6, 1886. He gave the name of Charles Stewart. . . . He was anxious and nervous about himself, and listened very attentively to my directions. . . . He said there was a lady with him in the next room, and that he would be glad if I gave the directions to her. The lady then came in. I really do not remember how Parnell described her. I gave her the directions about dietary. She seemed to be very anxious, and listened carefully. I saw Parnell several times afterwards.

It was not till later that Sir Henry Thompson learned that Mr. Stewart was Mr. Parnell. Sir Henry Thompson told me personally six years after Parnell had died, that his case wanted rest, and change of life, even more than diet and medicines. His vitality and spirit, his gallant resolution to keep in the saddle, produced surprising rallies from time to time; but from 1886 to 1891, when life's fitful fever ended, he was always a stricken man. In all that period there was not a month in which the lady who had accompanied him to consult Sir Henry Thompson was not his watchful nurse, as well as his beloved friend, as well as his worldly-wise adviser and confidential diplomatist. Friendship without passion may be impossible between an attractive man and a beautiful woman; but whether or not that be so, there can be no doubt that the devoted friendship between Charles Stewart Parnell and Katherine O'Shea was of the truest, the deepest, the most tender, the most unselfish which it is given to mortals to share. Fatal may be the impulse of Aphrodite; but in any event, Parnell, the victim of Church and people, a culpable victim if you will, was at least a pattern and Galahad of single-hearted purity by comparison, say, with François René, Vicomte de Chateaubriand, the courted darling of Church and society, the champion of the altar and the throne, the author of the 'Genius of Christianity.' I do not say this to extenuate what is blameworthy, nor to darken the shades of infamy of traitorous followers and vile multitudes, but because truth is truth. All which does not affect the fact that philandering friendships with other men's wives, and

nursing divinities, and soft hands alternating caresses and digestive draughts, make an unimpressive and, indeed, burlesque accompaniment to the professed leadership of a nation's vindication. The *Paolo and Francesca* of a sort of hospital-ward romance might, with the aid of the genius of Dante, form a sentimental pendant to the *Dame aux Camélias*. They came to somewhat ridiculous grief, ridiculous though tragically miserable, in the prosaic regions frequented by parliamentary wirepullers and belligerent parish priests. After all, poor Parnell had not made himself a leader of men. It was Mat Harris and bucolic Warwicks of his sort who had pronounced that a nation of peasants wanted a bit of a landlord and a nation of Catholics would look well with a Protestant at their head. It was the ‘bellowing slaves’ of John Mitchell’s burning contempt who shouted to Charles Stewart Parnell—merely because he had walked through his paces on a few obstructed Bills as the Three of the *Morning Post* taught him—‘Come and rule over us. Walk on us. Be our king.’ Pat Egan pressed the button, and Pat Ford did the rest. Even Lord Morley, laudably anxious to honour him whom the revered chief seemed once to have delighted to honour, has to admit—‘Life of Gladstone,’ ii. 408—that as statesmanship goes, Parnell was a stick. ‘Of constructive faculty he never showed a trace. He was not a man of ideas or ideals, or knowledge, or political maxims, or even of the practical reason in any of its higher senses.’ A splendid divisional commander on a limited field, with his general instructions in his hand, Parnell was like a keen, prompt, and resolute colonel of cavalry. While I gave him his general instructions, his fame ascended day by day. But even Murat, that whirlwind genius of the sabre, made an indifferent kinglet of Naples. It was not a handsome, ignorant, autocratic, and infirm hussar that could be the Deak and Cavour of Ireland.

Mr. Gladstone’s first essay in fancy constitution-making had collapsed, and he was now leading the united Liberals and Parnellites to sit in opposition. The stipendiaries of the skirmishing fund had not, decidedly not,

'got the handling of millions a year.' The hat was to go circulating between New York and San Francisco for another quarter of a century, or more. The real leader at Westminster of the troop of the League as well as the host of the Liberals was Mr. Gladstone and no other. From the union of hearts of 1886 to the Irish Secretaryship of Mr. Birrell in the next century the relations of the Irish Parliamentary party to the English Liberal party remained practically unaltered. There might be passing breezes, educational, financial, between the consorts, but the *consortium* continued; and the general instructions came from the vicinity of the National Liberal Club. As for Parnell, ill, insulted, and impotent of authority under his tinsel cap of maintenance, he retired more and more into abstention and Eltham villa. Illness was the predominating note of all accounts of the falling idol. 'December 7, 1886. Mr. Parnell called, looking very ill and worn.' So wrote Lord Morley. Even the political suicide of Lord Randolph Churchill on the eve of Christmas could give the spent champion no sufficient stimulus to take advantage of the resulting perturbations, which might have turned to convulsions, of the parliamentary world. Even the contemptuous defiance of his disapproval and condemnation of the plan of campaign, founded in spite of his anger and protests by Messrs. William O'Brien, John Dillon, and T. M. Healy, failed to move him to more than an ineffective demonstration. As I have already mentioned, Parnell was setting out for Ireland to oppose the plan when he was met at Euston itself by Mr. E. D. Gray, M.P., who had crossed from Dublin in hot haste to warn him that the ring-leaders would reject his orders and that the Leaguers would back the ringleaders. The uncrowned king was discrowned indeed. The plan of campaign, by which tenants formed a bank of their rents among themselves, and if the landlord declined to accept what they chose to offer, kept the whole sum for their own purposes, had struck most persons outside of the political economy of Saturn as the finest thing in the repudiation of contracts,



and even the repudiation of Land Court rents, which had yet been attempted. The O'Sheas told Parnell that Home Rule for such a community struck mere Englishmen as equivalent to a general liberation of lunatics, by preference from Broadmoor Criminal Asylum. Parnell called on Mr. John Morley to express his dissent and admit his helplessness. 'He said that he had been very ill, and had taken no part, so that he stands free and uncommitted.' Mr. John Morley had told him that the effect of the plan in England was 'wholly bad; it offends almost more even than outrages.' But even Mr. John Morley was unaware of the lengths to which Mr. Gladstone was prepared to go in order to prove to the Irish party and their constituents that a greater than Parnell had arisen for the solace of the sorrows of Erin. When Gladstone should strike finally, he intended the way to be prepared and the stroke to be sure. Gladstone did not believe a bit in the resignation of that moody, discontented spirit, which had denied him so proudly in the days of Forster's coercion-on-suspicion, and which chafed so impatiently against the bit and bridle of the Kilmainham compact. Parnell was an out-manceuvred second-rate, but he was a glorious fighter, and he had still prestige outside of the parliamentarians. If, even now, he 'pitched England to blazes,' as a stout Wolfe Toner from Belfast advised him at this time, if he swept once more Irish America in a storm of fiercer denunciations, if he forbade a shilling to be paid to any parliamentary fund except by his personal authority, anything was possible, at least as regarded Gladstonian Home Rule. In face of the doubtful situation, the old parliamentary hand resolved to go one better, far better, than Mr. Parnell. While the member for Cork frowned at the plan and the campaigners, the member for Midlothian took the most conspicuous opportunity of condemning the insurgents in such a way as to delight them altogether. At an enthusiastic meeting in the Memorial Hall, London, Mr. Gladstone first declared, with proper respect for law and order, 'that the plan of campaign was one of those devices that cannot be reconciled

with the principles of law and order in a civilised country.' Perfectly constitutional commonplace! The old parliamentary hand went to show that there were other considerations. 'Yet we all know that such devices are the certain result of misgovernment.' Here was hope for the plan at any rate. Nay more, by far the bigger villains were the British Government of the day, which was not a Gladstone Government.

With respect to this particular instance—'particular instance' was good—if the plan be blameable, I feel its authors are not one-tenth part so blameable as the Government whose contemptuous refusal of what they have now granted was the parent and source of the mischief.

It would soon be too late for Parnell to try and beat that, even in America.

The guilt of the British Government was thus, at a modest and conscientious estimate, *more than nine-tenths greater* than anything which could be justly said of the plan-of-campaigners themselves. How splendid! The political calculation was at least up to the level of the arithmetical, and the arithmetical was not far out. There was an epidemic of Gladstone worship among all the advocates of a short way with everything. I do not think I can better illustrate the effect of Mr. Gladstone's winning attitude upon the average mind in Ireland than by quoting a significant anecdote from Mr. Barry O'Brien's 'Life of Parnell,' which illustrates at the same time the popular impression with regard to Mr. Gladstone and the opinion of Parnell himself upon his formidable patron or rival; supplanter he was soon to be. Mr. Hogan was a leading supporter of the member for Cork, and it is he who tells the story:—

Parnell was staying with me in Cork in 1887. We were all at that time full of Mr. Gladstone and the Liberal party. *Almost every Nationalist in the city had a portrait of Mr. Gladstone in his house.* The old man was nearly as popular as the young chief. But Parnell remained unaffected by the general enthusiasm. While he was with me he never spoke of Mr. Gladstone or the

Liberal party. I thought this strange, so one evening I said to him: 'Mr. Parnell, every one in Cork is talking about Mr. Gladstone except you. I would like to know what you think of him now.' 'I think,' he answered frigidly, 'of Mr. Gladstone and the English people what I have always thought of them. They will do what we can make them do.'

Mr. Barry O'Brien goes on to fill in the background:—

The Irish members were as a rule eager to go on Liberal platforms and pleased with the social attentions showered upon them. All these things they thought were making for Home Rule. They had implicit faith in the Liberals and upheld the friendliest relations with their new allies. But Parnell stood apart.

In Lady St. Helier's 'Memories of Fifty Years,' the reader may read a vivid, though chastened, account of the real feelings with which English society tolerated or resented this transfer of the brethren of the Boycott and the Fund to the company and conversation, the tea-tables and the dining-tables of 'dirty little England,' as a poet of the party used to designate the land of his present hospitalities. Not his bitterest enemy will censure the broken chieftain of the League Conventions that he at least loathed the new gush. 'But Parnell stood apart.'

Meantime the great and solemn game of party government was being played for all it was worth. The Conservatives, having come into office in 1886, had at least six years to take their whack at the national cake. The self-destruction of Lord Randolph Churchill had removed all danger of a substantial innovation in the ways of the Right Hon. Tadpole and the Hon. Taper. Lord Salisbury was devoted to foreign affairs, and was getting very tired. The general election which had followed the resignation of Mr. Gladstone had given the Conservatives and Liberal Unionists the imposing mass of 394 supporters, while the Gladstonians and Parnellites united only 276. But with the practical disappearance of Lord Randolph disappeared the chance of originality in Conservative policy with regard



to Ireland or anywhere else. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach brought back for a brief season his great and unsympathetic ability and his flawless deportment to the Irish Secretaryship, but resigned that charge to Mr. Arthur Balfour, formerly the least attached member of the Fourth party, who now met the plan of campaign with a simple and sweeping extension of magisterial jurisdiction known as the Crimes Act. Where trial by jury was impeded by pressure on the jurors, two magistrates might be the tribunal and inflict summary punishment. This was felt to be a serious interference with the liberty of intimidation, and abiding discontent was the consequence. As criminals must be punished somehow, if juries are not allowed to act, recourse must be had to some other expedient. The Land Act of 1881 was also extended to include further classes of tenants, without either promoting tillage or preventing emigration. Mr. John Dillon, arrested for plan-of-campaigning, gave bail for good behaviour, and being released, proceeded promptly to demonstrate that 'good behaviour' was to carry out the plan. It was the sole joke of a serious career. The doughty refusal of Mr. William O'Brien to don the small-clothes of prison costume during a period of incarceration in Tullamore Jail brought the Breeks of Tullamore among the brighter constellations of the political firmament in Ireland. Mr. Gladstone continued to distinguish himself as the new Achilles of Erin in place of the invisible member for Cork, warmly and eloquently resenting the speeches of Mr. Balfour in the House and Lord Salisbury outside of Parliament. With regard to Parnell, the *Times* played him an unpleasant trick by revealing that he was accustomed to live in a London suburb under the name of Preston. The *Times* must have known very well that it was impossible for a man of such fame to live without molestation unless hidden by some disguise. But the *Times* was preparing more serious references to the ex-president of the Land League. It is to be observed that a lack of gentlemanly feeling, similar to his purported revelation of Lord Carnarvon's private views on Home

Rule, led Mr. Parnell to offer a gross affront to Mr. Chamberlain. He actually accused him of having, while member of Mr. Gladstone's Cabinet in 1881, revealed Cabinet secrets to the Irish party for the purpose of conciliating their support. In the first place, the accusation was unprovable. Secondly, it was absurdly improbable. Thirdly, Mr. Chamberlain denied it, though it required no denial. Even if the British statesman had committed the impossible crime, it did not lie with the Irish participants of the offence to betray their overcommunicative ally.

## CHAPTER XXIV

THE SESSIONS OF 1888 AND 1889—BEHIND THE SCENES OF  
PARNELLISM AND CRIME—SIR CHARLES RUSSELL'S  
MANAGEMENT—WHAT THE PUBLIC SAW AND WHAT  
THE PUBLIC DID NOT SEE—FOUNDING THE INVINCIBLES  
—THE CONCLUSIONS?

A Letter from Sir Charles Russell—The Beginnings of the Trouble—*O'Donnell v. Walter*—What the Public saw and what the Public did not see—The Special Commission—The Invincibles founded by the Land League—The Conclusions?

IT will be always difficult for aftercomers to realise the terrific excitement which held the three kingdoms in its grip at the moment that the attacks of the *Times* upon the Land League and its leaders, now the inseparable allies of a great English party, fell upon the public attention. It was because the great Liberal leader had identified himself completely, passionately, uncompromisingly with the Parnellite party that the red-hot accusations of the leading journal produced such an effect. Everything which soiled the Irish party soiled their British allies, and especially engaged the position of the old man eloquent who had sprung to the defence of the Parnellite Home Rulers with a vigour and versatility which left Mr. Parnell himself—always ailing, usually reticent, and often absent—completely in the shade. Mr. Gladstone had fallen upon the Tory oppressors of Ireland very much as he had fallen upon the Turkish oppressors of Bulgaria. The men of the Irish Leagues were the defenders of natural justice and eternal right. The Tory Government, its officials, and police, were provokers of legitimate resistance and violators of equity and law. When the Government proclaimed outlawry against the National League, Mr. Gladstone moved a



resolution against the proclamation. When the Government took steps against boycotting and exclusive dealing, Mr. Gladstone declared that boycotting was one of the 'only weapons of defence belonging to a poor and disheartened people.' He never spoke of the new Crimes Act except as an outrage on the law. It was no wonder that 'a picture of Mr. Gladstone was in almost every Nationalist's house.' Among other consequences of this more than Hibernian zeal and championship the reader will be asked to understand, in the light of these antecedents, the success with which Mr. Gladstone swept the Irish peasantry a few years later into his war against Parnell. It is the business of an historian to connect causes and effects.

But the attacks of the *Times* upon the Parnellites had the unexpected result of forcing me to bring an action for libel against the mighty newspaper; and that action was marked by strange incidents visible to the public, and by still graver features of which the public knew nothing. Out of that action came the Special Commission of Judges to inquire into the allegations of the *Times*; and out of the Special Commission came further consequences which have not ceased to influence Ireland and Great Britain down to the present day.

Let me quote at once a most remarkable document, a letter from Sir Charles Russell, afterwards Chief Justice of England, which will at once indicate the existence of curious undercurrents and underacts of the most enigmatical description. Sir Charles Russell was the eminent Irish Liberal lawyer whom the Parnellites had introduced into Parliament in 1880 as member for Dundalk, as I have already mentioned; who had faithfully defended their cause until it had been accepted by the Liberal leader himself; and who united a great reputation to great talents in a degree rarely surpassed at the bar or on the bench of Great Britain or Ireland. He was never my counsel. Yet I had asked for an explanation of his intervention in my case; and his reply shows how deeply he felt interested, and how completely he judged his intervention to have been required.

See *Times*  
 9 June 1881  
 Parnell  
 explanation  
 by O'Donnell  
 motion -  
 servant of  
 the Queen  
 the accused  
 his own  
 account of  
 the British  
 just to  
 Sir Charles Russell  
 English letter  
 to himself  
 a Boer  
 sympathy  
 for the  
 Parnell  
 she had  
 brought  
 him for  
 sale

I had been, and continue to be, of the opposite opinion ; but the eminent advocate is entitled to state a different view, a view frankly declaring that my action against the *Times* imperilled interests which were to him weighty and supreme. After quoting the letter, I shall leave the matter in abeyance for the further explanation of Sir Charles Russell's intervention which will arise from the history of the facts. I ask the reader's, the public's, most earnest co-operation in ascertaining the true lesson of all the events which will be narrated. The sincerity and anxiety of a man like Sir Charles Russell cannot be minimised or called in question. I may mention that I had written two letters to Sir Charles, the second merely pressing for a reply to the first.

SIR CHARLES RUSSELL TO MR. F. HUGH O'DONNELL

10 NEW COURT, LINCOLN'S INN :  
January 21, 1890.

SIR,

I beg to apologise for my delay in answering (what I must call) your extraordinary letter of the 3rd inst. I have been much pressed.

You seem to write under some serious misconceptions. Any opinion I expressed to your Counsel, I expressed in good faith, and with no indirect motive. I should myself have opened your case in the mode your Counsel did as the best for your interests. I might, indeed, had I been in the case, have yielded to the pressure of the Lord Chief Justice's observations, and contrary to my own judgment, put you in the Box, but it must be obvious to you that, had that course been pursued, the result would in no way have been altered.

One thing I must distinctly state: To my knowledge neither Mr. Parnell, nor anyone in his interest, knew of my expressed opinion, and I assure you that whether my opinion was right or was wrong, it was dictated solely with a view to what I conceived to be your best interest.

‡ You seem to suggest that your action was for Mr. Parnell's benefit. I can only say I took and take a very opposite view.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) C. RUSSELL.

F. H. O'DONNELL, Esq.

At present I will only ask the reader to note that Sir Charles Russell, a lawyer of the highest authority and acumen, and a man attached to Mr. Parnell by strong ties of gratitude, admits that he had acted under the conviction, the twofold conviction, that I ought not to be 'put in the Box,' and that my action was the 'very opposite' of beneficial to Mr. Parnell. As to the eminent advocate's further opinion that his communication to my counsel 'was dictated solely with a view to what he conceived to be my best interest,' I remain at an utter loss to understand why an ex-Attorney-General of England should volunteer any interest whatever in the law action of a private Irish plaintiff, with whom he was not even acquainted, and have taken such an unprecedented step 'solely with a view' to that unknown plaintiff's 'best interest.' I had tried to keep Sir Charles Russell out of Parliament altogether; and had very nearly succeeded. Mr. Parnell had brought him into Parliament and into his splendid career. Why on earth should Sir Charles Russell think 'solely of my best interest'?

I quote this important letter, in the first place, as a decisive proof that the proceedings which kept me out of the witness-box in my action against the *Times* were recommended to my counsel by the 'expressed opinion' of the greatest lawyer of a great party and the wisest and firmest friend of Mr. Parnell himself. As appears also from the letter of Sir Charles Russell, I personally was profoundly dissatisfied with that prevention of my own testimony in the witness-box in my own case.

### THE BEGINNINGS OF THE TROUBLE

As everything should proceed in order in the grave inquiry into some of the gravest issues which have ever affected the policy of Great Britain in Ireland, I proceed very briefly to state how I was dragged into the war which the *Times* was waging against the Liberal party by means of a merciless indictment of Mr. Parnell and the Parnellites.



I had retired from Parliament. Why should the *Times* mention my name in a manner to force me to seek the reparation of an action for libel? The story is extraordinarily simple. Though I had retired from Parliament, I had taken for so many years so close, intimate, and usually prominent a part in the politics of my country, both as Home Rule representative and vice-president of the general organisation of the Irish electors in Great Britain; I had been so closely and constantly united with Mr. Parnell in the best years of his career; I was so concerned in the welfare and reputation of my native land; that I must necessarily follow with interest and anxiety the fearful denunciation of many of my former comrades which the leading journal was disseminating throughout the civilised world. I knew the Land League was very base; but I had not yet heard that it was connected with the Invincible assassins. I believed that its worst sins stopped at boycotting and intimidation, which were odious enough. I was convinced that Parnell, my intimate comrade, to say no more, for many years, was incapable of being privy to murderous crime. In this state of mind I happened to be living in Germany, on the Rhine near Cologne, when I read in a number of the *Times* a statement which tried to make out that Frank Byrne, the secretary of the Irish organisation of which I had been vice-president, a man undoubtedly compromised in the Invincible conspiracy, had been Parnell's private secretary and was in some way indebted also for his position as official secretary to Mr. Parnell. 'What shameful nonsense!' I cried. 'Isaac Butt and I brought Byrne into our office, and I had him promoted to the post which he held when he joined the Invincibles.' Without more ado, I—the man the best qualified in the whole world to tell the facts about my former subordinate—wrote to the *Times* to say that Mr. Parnell had nothing whatever to do either with Byrne's introduction, stay, or promotion in the secretariate of the organisation in question, and that Byrne had certainly never been his private secretary at all. I—ex-vice-president and ex-honorary secretary of the Irish electoral organisation in

Great Britain—had myself enlisted and promoted Byrne for his official work. He had been a model official, whatever might be his private criminality. Parnell had had nothing whatever to do with the matter, beyond succeeding, years later, as Byrne's official superior in a perfectly legitimate organisation.

Naturally I expected a handsome acknowledgment of error from the *Times*. To connect Parnell with Byrne's proceedings was so absurd ! To my considerable horror I found a hot-and-hot leader of the *Times*, full of discourtesies in my regard, asserting that my correction was quite irrelevant, and asking why I had not 'vindicated' myself, though 'naturally desirous to clear myself from the charge of association with murderers' ! I had never dreamed of clearing myself. I had cleared Parnell from having anything to do with the appointment of Byrne in the electoral organisation or in anything else. Byrne had been appointed by Isaac Butt and me. But now the *Times* brought against me 'the charge of association with murderers,' and deliberately added that my 'vindication' had failed ! This was at once idiotic and abominable. Idiotic as regards my reputation with those who knew me well, abominable in its effect on the rest of the world. I had acquaintances, very many men of distinction outside of England also, from Vienna to Madrid. Everybody read the *Times*. German and Austrian gentlemen wrote to me to express their surprise. What was I going to do ? The *Times* had deliberately added :—

When, however, we look at the substance of Mr. O'Donnell's vindication, . . . he leaves the greater part of the charges we have brought forward altogether untouched. . . . It is idle to quibble over the origin of Byrne's appointment when we know that he occupied, as, indeed, Mr. O'Donnell admits, a position of trust and influence in the councils of the Parnellite party.

What rubbish ! Byrne was a mere paid subordinate ; appointed by Butt and myself, long before Parnell came to the front ; and I had simply stated that fact, thinking that the courteous *Times* of old would at once correct its

misstatement, and thank me for the information. Instead of that due courtesy, I was held up to ridicule as a 'quibbler,' and to odium as a person 'charged with association with murderers,' and who had failed to produce a 'vindication' of that charge.

Was there ever anything more cruel and unexpected? Worse, if possible, was to follow. Having described me by name as 'an active agent in the Home Rule and Land League movements,' the *Times* asserted that the whole organisation of the Land League depended on brutal intimidation sanctioned by murder; and explicitly maintained that the Irish Home Rule party 'gloried in being the inventors of this organisation. . . . The whole conspiracy, whether carried on by mealy-mouthed gentlemen who sit at London dinner-tables, or by friends who organise arson and murder, is one and indivisible.' Here was a rain of painful assertion.

For weeks the *Times* went on bespattering the Home Rule party in Parliament, the Land League in Ireland, and the electoral organisation in Great Britain, *all as forming a single and indivisible organisation of intimidation and murder*; having at the same time explicitly described me as 'an active agent in the Home Rule and Land League movements.' The *Times* also spoke of Byrne as 'Mr. O'Donnell's *former colleague*' on the 'executive of the League'—Byrne, our paid clerk!—the Land Leagues and their branches in Great Britain and the United States being equally described, and repeatedly described, as forming 'a complete solidarity' of dastardly crime.

Of course, as I have already said, Byrne had never been our colleague, nor my colleague, nor 'my former colleague.' He was simply and solely our paid secretary, without vote or authority; and, if he had committed crimes or offences, they had no more to do with Mr. Parnell and myself than an act of forgery by a cashier of the Bank of England would have to do with the reputation of the Board of Governors. But the *Times* never altered, never withdrew, never apologised.

Still worse was to follow. The *Times* actually accused



a number of us by name, including my own name, as having constituted a criminal conference along with Mr. Parnell—on the occasion of the latter’s arrival at Willesden Junction when released on parole in April 1882—for the transaction or consideration of the ‘ many vital secrets on their minds.’ In fact, the *Times* took care to mention me twice on different occasions as a member of this committee of murder. On one occasion the *Times* recorded that ‘ Byrne was *one of the trusted few*—among the others were Mr. McCarthy, Mr. O’Donnell, and Mr. Quinn—who met Mr. Parnell when he was released on parole from Kilmainham in April 1882.’ On another occasion—to corroborate its own indictment!—the *Times* added this remark: ‘ *United Ireland* states that Mr. O’Donnell, M.P., also joined Mr. Parnell at Willesden.’ As for the murder conference at Willesden, the *Times* actually professed to be able to publish the following information, carefully coupling the Willesden conference with the subsequent atrocity in the Phoenix Park :—

But Mr. Parnell had the inexpressible mortification of informing his friends in both cities that his parole bound him to refrain from politics. His honour, indeed, was the sole obstacle to the most exhaustive discussion of all pending transactions between the confederates. The heads of Mr. Parnell’s several organisations were at hand. They had many vital secrets on their minds. They had every facility for private conference with their chief. All of them were not distinguished by a chivalrous regard for truth. But on the 24th Mr. Parnell returned to Kilmainham—his pledge, we are assured, inviolate, in letter and in spirit. He had his reward. He was definitely released on May 2, and hastened to London with his liberated lieutenants. On Saturday, May 6, he escorted Michael Davitt from Portland Prison to town. At Vauxhall the chiefs were met by Mr. Frank Byrne and other favoured disciples. The same evening Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Thomas Burke were stabbed with amputating knives in the Phoenix Park.

Of course, the murder conference about ‘ vital secrets ’ was a horrible fabrication. Mr. Justin McCarthy and I had met Parnell and brought him to Mr. McCarthy’s house in Jermyn Street. That was all. The story was fully told in

the *Freeman's Journal* of the next day, April 11, 1882. One correspondent of the *Freeman* stated in his paper :—

The arrangement was that Mr. Justin McCarthy, M.P., and Mr. F. H. O'Donnell, M.P., should meet the liberated member on behalf of the Parliamentary party. . . . Mr. Justin McCarthy, Mr. O'Donnell, Mr. F. Byrne, and Mr. T. Quinn then proceeded to Willesden to meet the member for Cork. At Camden Town a cab was procured, and Mr. Parnell, accompanied by Messrs. O'Donnell and McCarthy, drove to the residence of the latter in Jermyn Street.

Another *Freeman* correspondent wrote :—

At Camden Town Mr. Parnell, Mr. McCarthy, Mr. O'Donnell, and Mr. Byrne entered a four-wheel cab and drove to Euston Hotel, where several telegrams and letters from Paris were waiting the former. After receiving them, Mr. Parnell, &c., drove straight to Mr. McCarthy's private residence in Jermyn Street . . . where Mr. Parnell subsequently dined with Mr. McCarthy and Mr. O'Donnell. The member for Cork refused to see anyone.

The Press Association stated that 'Mr. Parnell, after dining at the residence of Mr. McCarthy, left shortly after ten o'clock to visit a friend, but before doing so he took leave of his host and Mr. O'Donnell, saying that he meant to slip away quietly out of town.'

For this the *Times* subsequently paid Mr. Parnell £5000 damages, without a trial even. How the *Times* treated me, whom it had equally implicated in the murder conference at Willesden, the reader will see. I should add, though this reflexion may seem out of place, that mingled with my indignation was a distinct sense of pain and sorrow, of sorrow and astonishment, that this outrage should have been offered to me by the *Times* of all papers in the world. The *Times* that for a dozen years had treated me with unvarying courtesy, even though generally opposed to me ; the *Times* that had—under the editorship of Delane—given more than a column to my maiden speech on India ; the *Times* that had, in a time of public peril, placed its best space at my disposal for the solution of the

arrears problem of the Land Act of 1881, and had declared that I had revealed 'the core of the Irish difficulty'! I did not understand until afterwards that the regular editorial direction had been superseded by a wild Irish syndicate of new and deplorable advisers.

By the way, here are the exact words of the mendacious letter to the editor in the *Times* of March 26, 1887, which had falsely asserted that Byrne had been Mr. Parnell's 'private secretary,' and which had led me to make the simple correction that was to be the pretext for overwhelming me with a flood of atrocious defamation:—

Allow me to add to your masterly articles on 'Parnellism and Crime' yet another fact proving how deeply connected Mr. Parnell was himself with the Invincibles. Mr. Frank Byrne, it is admitted, was *secretary to the Irish Parliamentary party*, and was on intimate relations with the leaders of that party, taking his instructions from them at their offices in Palace Chambers, Bridge Street, Westminster. . . . His last exploit is a letter. . . . He states . . . 'The torch, the knife, and dynamite, are weapons which are at the disposal even of an unarmed and poverty-stricken nation like ours.' Such, then, are the words and sentiments of *Mr. Parnell's quondam private secretary* now freed from the obligation of concealing his opinions.

Of course, it was as ridiculously false that Frank Byrne had been 'secretary of the Irish Parliamentary party' as that he had been 'private secretary to Mr. Parnell'; but this ignorant and calumnious rubbish passed as historical truth with the ignorant camerilla which had taken the place of the editors of the *Times*. I had no alternative but to take legal steps to defend my reputation, especially abroad, against atrocious allegations which the *Times* did not even offer to withdraw. Letters of inquiry and wonderment had come to me from all parts of Europe: from members of the German Reichstag and the Austrian Reichsrath; from the Duc de Broglie; from my kinsman, Count Henry O'Donnell, in Tyrol, on behalf of his father and uncle, Counts Moritz and Maximillian O'Donnell; from the Rector Magnificus of the University of Pesth. 'Was it usual in



English party warfare to describe honourable opponents as the trusted accomplices of assassins? ' Another Continental O'Donnell, the Duke of Tetuan in Spain, afterwards congratulated me on my resolution to demand satisfaction against the heaviest odds.

#### WHAT THE PUBLIC SAW

When I sent my notification of action for sore and shameful libel to the *Times*, I confess that I still expected a prompt apology. It was the great newspaper which had said that I was an active Land Leaguer, and that the Land League was an indivisible organisation of villains. If the *Times* had simply said that I was a Home Rule member of parliament, this statement would be accurate. To say that I was a Land Leaguer, and one of 'the trusted few' who shared the most guilty secrets of Parnell's criminal breast, was decidedly too much. To mark me out by name as an accomplice in a committee of murder at Willesden was a flight of the imagination of the wild Irish syndicate in temporary possession of Printing House Square that distinctly called for the notice of a London jury. I had never been a Land Leaguer, though the *Times* now said so. I had helped every Irishman of every political creed against such tyranny as the coercion-on-suspicion system. I would defend an Orangeman as staunchly as a Fenian against misgovernment and wrong. I was poor, not in good health; but I could not tolerate wanton defamation such as the *Times* used in my regard. By the *Times* I only mean the temporary misusers of the famous name.

There came no apology! I asked an old friend, Mr. Raphael Biale, solicitor, the son of Mr. Carlo Biale, a great Indian merchant who had been with me in some of my Indian policy, to take the necessary steps to bring my plaint into court and before a jury of London. The English jurors might think me an Irish rebel, but I thought they would do me English justice. I feared no foul play. I had the intention, as the case was political, to plead my own case,

knowing every turn, I thought, of Irish matters concerned in the affair. I wish that I had adhered to my intention. The able junior counsel employed by my solicitor gradually won so much of my confidence in his powers, and my own health was so fatigued, that I consented ultimately to leaving the case in his hands in the usual way. It all seemed such plain sailing. I had been so grossly and wantonly wronged.

It was resolved on Parnell's pressing requests to leave the *Times* as much as possible to its own resources by volunteering no avoidable sources of information; to have me identified by witnesses as the Irish politician who had been so shamefully insulted; and to challenge the *Times* to make a defence. There were the libels, writ large in its own columns. Here was the man whom it had libelled. What had it to say to justify those 'charges' of association with murderers, and 'trusty' sharing of murderous councils which it alleged against me by name? I was myself in favour of a bolder course, but had yielded, on solemn condition that nothing should be risked to endanger my whole case from coming before the jury. I knew of no complicity of the Land League in the Invincible conspiracy, and was prepared to say so.

To my considerable surprise the judge was Lord Chief Justice Coleridge. I had heard that he was weak and sentimental, and a passionate politician. To my considerable anger the leading counsel for the *Times* was the Attorney-General actually in the Government. It was lawful, but it did not look quite fair. My counsel opened my plaint; quoted the long outrages of the *Times* from its own columns, entirely uncontested in point of exact quotation; called some distinguished and impartial witnesses, like Mr. J. Cowen, M.P., and Mr. Henry Lucy, to prove that the libels were directly recognised as applying to me and as morally impugning my honour and reputation, and then challenged the defendants for a word of true defence.

Here a serious interposition occurred. 'Are you not putting the plaintiff in the box?' asked the judge. 'You

undertook to place the plaintiff in the box.' 'So I shall, my lord, in reply to the defendants, when they answer to the plaint of my client.' 'But the *Times* may so elect as to render you incapable of putting the plaintiff in the box at a later stage.' I questioned my counsel anxiously if this was possible. 'Quite impossible. I have the highest advice.' 'Well, I have warned you,' repeated the judge, with manifest emotion. But, without my knowledge, Sir Charles Russell had bound my counsel to this course.

The Attorney-General arose for the *Times*. Premising that he would prove every word that he was about to advance, he stated that the *Times* had never referred to me except in the way of passing and innocuous observation; that I had no just complaint; that the *Times* had only attacked Mr. Parnell and the Parnellites, of whom the plaintiff was not one; and that he would show to the jury that the charges of the *Times* were directed at Mr. Parnell and the Parnellites alone.

'But the *Times* had said and printed that I was an active Land Leaguer and trusty follower of Parnell; that I shared his fatal secrets; that I had quibbled, but had been unable to vindicate myself; that at Willesden Conference I was one of the very chiefs and heads of Parnell's organisations?' So I whispered to my counsel. 'Certainly, certainly. We shall show all that by further evidence when you go into the box in reply to the evidence which the Attorney-General has engaged himself to produce. He could not make that speech without fulfilling his engagement.' So replied my counsel to my queries, and the Attorney-General went on pouring out, hour after hour, the concentrated or diffused nastiness of all the accusations which the *Times* had been making for months against Parnell and his followers. But not a word did the Attorney-General say of my being 'one of Parnell's trusty few,' of my being present at the council of fatal secrets at Willesden, of my having quibbled without being able to vindicate myself from the 'charge' of 'association with murderers.' Meantime the visage of the judge grew hourly darker with indignation and suspicion.



He seemed to have been told more than he wished to hear. He seemed to have received information of a grave kind. He had seen repeatedly Sir Charles Russell.

At last, with a final declaration that the *Times* had never, never referred to Mr. O'Donnell except in the most casual and inoffensive way ; that the *Times* was absolutely unable to account for the presence of Mr. O'Donnell as apparently a complainant ; that the absolute inanity of Mr. O'Donnell's case was sufficiently indicated to the judge and the jury by Mr. O'Donnell's refusal to go into the box, the Attorney-General concluded by saying that it would be perfectly monstrous to call evidence to answer a non-existent case, and that therefore the case of the *Times* was closed !

'And quite right too,' said the judge, with looks of loathing directed at me. 'Has the plaintiff's counsel anything to say?' My counsel pointed out that the *Times* had not produced the evidence which the Attorney-General had pledged himself to produce, that not only the 'plaintiff, but numbers of the plaintiff's witnesses were ready to answer any attempt at substantiation made by the *Times*. . . .' My counsel got no further. In accents quivering with indignation the presiding judge declared that he would be no party to any further prolongation of this miserable business. 'If the plaintiff's counsel had still anything to say about his client's case, let him say it at once.' The Attorney-General looked triumphant. A gentleman, whom I recognised as Sir Charles Russell, gazed with undisguised admiration at the Attorney-General. The case was broken down. My counsel made a short struggle. Then the judge made his charge to the jury. The charge was a cavalry charge. 'Who was the plaintiff? Nobody had ever heard of him. Mr. Parnell never knew him. He was said to have been a secretary of some branch of the Land League. There were scores of obscure branches, no doubt. He had not dared to go into the box. What were his motives? We had all heard of men nourishing mean jealousies who would shrink from no step which would place innocent persons in positions of gross and undeserved

obloquy. He would not say if the plaintiff was one of these men. At all events, he had exposed the leader of his own countrymen to a torrent of imputations of the most terrible kind, which the methods of the plaintiff's case left Mr. Parnell no opportunity of disproving. The plaintiff did not even enter the box. He left the case to the jury with that single observation.'<sup>1</sup>

In less than five minutes the jury found that the *Times* had never referred to the plaintiff except in the way of kindness. Judgment was duly entered for the *Times*.

I had sat in a certain mystification as these curious developments developed. I had heard of such things in comic literature. I seemed to enter into the spirit of enjoyment in which the Attorney-General walked away beaming in one direction, and Sir Charles Russell in another direction, and noted even the agitation in which the Lord Chief Justice, still flushed with his emotions, retired to his disrobing-room. But around me the buzz rose to tumult. 'A damned bonnet for the *Times*,' said an Irish member, echoed by other Irish members. 'How much did he get?' squeaked the voice of a small Jew-like boy. My solicitor whispered to me: 'Better get away quickly and quietly.' This was a trial in the High Court of Justice! All the newspapers either declared that the case was perfectly frivolous, or that I had been the agent of the *Times* to expose Parnell to open insult and denunciation, which he was in no position to answer owing to O'Donnell's infamy! A single voice spoke out the truth. Mr. Michael Davitt, impracticable semi-Socialist but honest man, declared to

<sup>1</sup> What amazed and appalled me above all during the delivery of all this furious fustian and misstatement was, that I knew already, since many years, that Coleridge and Russell were intimate and confidential friends as well as political and forensic colleagues. Russell had spoken with Coleridge a dozen times during the trial. Russell, as my counsel had admitted to me, had been the prime author of my not being a witness. Yet here was Coleridge covering me with falsehoods, which a single word from Russell must have made impossible. A strange business! Coleridge had accompanied Russell to America four years before, when Russell visited the States 'with introductions to the Irish leaders from Parnell' (Barry O'Brien's *Life of Lord Russell*, chap. x.). Why was Russell silent? Who told Coleridge all the misstatements? Who primed him? I was appalled.

the public and the press that Mr. O'Donnell, though unfortunate, had been straight all through, that everything which he had done at the trial had been counselled by friends of justice, of whom he, Michael Davitt, had been one, having been consulted by Mr. O'Donnell all through. He, Mr. Davitt, had expected a very different issue and verdict. Honest Michael! 'But where are the others?' I asked myself with wonderment and disgust. Where was Parnell?

#### WHAT THE PUBLIC DID NOT SEE

It is time to contribute all I know now to the elucidation of these strange and significant intrigues. Let the public who read these pages follow the pieces of evidence. I ask the judgment and the co-operation of the public in the formation of the ultimate opinion which ought to be held about these matters, their accompaniments, and their sequels.

The first sequel was that Mr. Parnell rose in the House of Commons to demand some sort of appropriate tribunal, some commission of inquiry, which could probe the abominable charges which had been directed against him in the course of the trial of *O'Donnell v. Walter*. He had had no opportunity of giving evidence. He had been waiting in the court, but had not been called. He asked for the simple justice of some better inquiry than that.

It was distinctly unfortunate for the foregoing representation of the case that Mr. Parnell, more even than Mr. Davitt, had presided over the whole direction of Mr. O'Donnell's case against the *Times*. We have already seen the letter quoted at the opening of this chapter that, in answer to remonstrances from me, Sir Charles Russell admitted that he had advised my counsel 'not to put me in the box.' I shall now quote the exact text of the instructions given by Mr. Parnell to my solicitor, Mr. Biale, and taken down by Mr. Biale, upon the conduct, the evidence, &c., in the case of *O'Donnell v. Walter*. The first fact which may arrest the reader's attention is, that if Mr.



Parnell 'had had no opportunity of giving evidence, had been waiting in court, but had not been called,' this result cannot have really surprised him, considering that he had begged Mr. O'Donnell 'not to call him as it would expose him to cross-examination.' The whole of Mr. Parnell's instructions to Mr. O'Donnell's solicitor as to evidence of Home Rule Cabinet Ministers, evidence of Home Rulers who had been Fenians, &c., will also deserve consideration. As Mr. Parnell's instructions were given on April 13, 1888, and the case of *O'Donnell v. Walter* did not open until July 2, it will be apparent that Mr. Parnell had been in a position to know why he would not be called, if possible, *at least ten weeks in advance*.

Here is the exact text of Mr. Parnell's instructions:—

*Mr. Parnell's Instructions to Mr. O'Donnell's Solicitor.*

ELDON CHAMBERS,  
30 FLEET STREET.

Notes of Interview with C. S. Parnell, M.P., on April 13, 1888, made by R. A. Biale on April 13, 1888. *Present*—Mr. Parnell, Mr. Campbell, M.P., his Secretary, and Mr. R. A. Biale.

(1) *Forged letter.*

If signature is genuine it must have been written by Parnell before end of 1879—as Parnell has never signed his name with the same kind of capital C in Chas. since 1879. Of course if the signature was written since 1879 it must be a forgery. Mr. Parnell signed the word 'Chas.' three times in three different styles—1st to end of 1879; 2nd from end of 1879 to beginning of 1882; and 3rd from beginning of 1882 to present date. Mr. Parnell can prove these three styles as he has kept *all* his letters to his Agent in Ireland for years.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Parnell has on many occasions given his autograph to friends and others.

Parnell has a shrewd suspicion that the letter was offered by Americans to the Government, the Irish Police or Scotland Yard, who refused it because it was a forgery, and then it got into the hands of the *Times*.

(2) *Witnesses.*

Parnell prefers not to be called by O'Donnell as it will expose

<sup>1</sup> I add the facsimile reproduction of 'the three styles' of signatures

him to cross-examination, which at any time is never pleasant to anyone, but he will be present in court and assist O'Donnell in every way so as to afford the *Times* an opportunity to call him if they wish. Mr. Parnell thinks it is not wise to call any Home Rule Cabinet Ministers (Spencer, Morley, &c.); in fact, they would decline to give evidence on the ground of privilege; or any Home Rulers who have been Fenians, such as Davitt, O'Connor Power, O'Brien, Healy. Parnell advises O'Donnell to call J. McCarthy, T. P. O'Connor, Sexton, T. D. Sullivan. Neither Superintendent Mallon nor Mr. Jenkinson should be called. Mr. Parnell instructed me to obtain discovery of documents, and would like to accompany me to the offices of the solicitors for the *Times* to inspect the documents and especially the forged letter. Parnell promised to inquire where I could see the file of the *Irish World*, and wished me to make inquiries at the Irish National League Offices, 26 Great Smith Street, Westminster, and *Freeman* office, for Trial of Invincibles and for the dates of the Funds.

(3) *Counsel.*

Mr. Parnell would like Mr. Lockwood, Q.C., and on being asked if he—i.e. the League—would provide funds as O'Donnell was not a wealthy man, said he would like to know the limit and

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written for my solicitor by Mr. Parnell in my solicitor's office at the meeting in question.

Char-\_\_\_\_\_ to end of 1879

Char- from end of 1879 to beginning  
of 1882

Char- from beginning of 1882 to present  
date

would consider it, and that a fund would be set aside for it. Mr. Parnell would like a consultation with Lockwood, Q.C.

This interview lasted from 6 to 7.30 P.M.

The above notes were written

by R. A. BIALE.

Parnell had been so anxious to secure this interview with my solicitor that we find him writing on April 9 and telegraphing on April 13 to secure the consultation.

*Parnell's Letter to Solicitor.*

HOUSE OF COMMONS, LONDON :

April 9, 1888.

DEAR SIR,

I propose to call on you next Friday at 5 P.M., unless I should hear from you meantime that some other day or hour would be more convenient to you.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours truly,

R. A. BIALE, ESQ.

CHAS. S. PARNELL.

*Parnell's Telegram to Solicitor.*

April 13, 1888.

To —BIALE, ELDON CHAMBERS, 30 FLEET STREET.

Am accidentally detained here till six will call after that hour if convenient to you or else to-morrow three.

PARNELL.

In conformity with this arrangement by Parnell for 'after six,' we find from my solicitor's notes that the meeting at which Parnell gave his instructions actually occurred between six and half-past seven.

It will complete sufficiently the proof of the thoroughness with which I allowed Parnell to give his advice, and to have his advice followed, at every point of my case in which his interests were involved, if I add the following extract from the letter of my solicitor, a few days later in date, *which informed Mr. Parnell that some of his most important suggestions had been already adopted.* It will be seen from this letter also that the knowledge of the actual nature and



amount of the documents which the *Times* alleged to be so incriminating was obtained by Mr. Parnell through my assistance and at my expense.

April 18, 1888.

*O'Donnell and Walter.*

DEAR SIR,

I have to-day obtained an order from the High Court of Justice for discovery of documents. This means that the *Times* must file an affidavit specifying *all* documents they have in their possession relating to the matter in question, differentiating those they are willing to allow me to inspect from those they may object to produce for my inspection, and stating the grounds for such refusal.

Immediately on receipt of this affidavit I will obtain an appointment to inspect the documents at the offices of the solicitors for the *Times*, and will give you notice of such appointment, so that you may (provided the solicitors to the *Times* do not object) accompany me to inspect the documents, and especially the forged letter.

I must point out to you that there is not much time before the trial in which to get up the evidence, but before doing so I think an early consultation should be fixed with Mr. Lockwood, Q.C., at which you should be present, so that he might advise on the evidence we ought to adduce at the trial.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

RALPH BIALE.

CHAS. PARNELL, Esq.,  
HOUSE OF COMMONS, S.W.

I may mention, indeed it ought to be mentioned, that I find in my solicitor's notes that the misspelling of certain words in the forged letters which enabled Sir Charles Russell to establish Pigott's guilt in a dramatic scene before the Special Commission was all discovered and noticed by my solicitor on the occasion on which he accompanied Mr. Parnell to the solicitors of the *Times* for inspection of the documents under the order of the court which I had obtained for this purpose. Here is my solicitor's note on the same : 'Two mistakes in spelling of letters—inexcuseable and hesitency.' Pigott in the box made the same mistake when

asked to write from dictation by Sir Charles Russell. Every portion, indeed, of Parnell's subsequent defence was supplied or suggested by means of my case and at my expense. The reader will admit that rarely in the history of judicial affairs have ingratitude and hypocrisy been equal to the ingratitude and hypocrisy shown to me by the Parnellites, their abettors, and allies. Poor, hesitating, embarrassed Parnell himself I place in a far less culpable category.

*Lord Morley's Narrative.*

In his most interesting 'Life of Gladstone,' which is sometimes most interesting when it is least accurate, Lord Morley throws some valuable sidelights, valuable though unintentional, upon the Parnellite conduct of the affair. Premising, according to the plan in vogue, that I had brought the action 'from motives that have remained obscure,' Lord Morley, just mentioning me casually and inaccurately as 'an Irishman who had formerly sat in Parliament as a political follower of Mr. Parnell'—I had been a follower of Butt—proceeds to give this ingenuous statement of the production of the letters for the first time in the course of the Attorney-General's speech, of Mr. Parnell's pained surprise—he had seen them all previously with my solicitor—and of his recourse to Lord Morley for counsel and advice. I ask the reader's amused attention for Lord Morley's narrative :—

The production of this further batch of letters stirred Mr. Parnell from his usual impassiveness. His former determination to sit still was shaken. The day after the Attorney-General's speech, he came to the present writer to say that he thought of sending a paragraph to the newspapers that night, with an announcement of his intention to bring an action against the *Times*, narrowed to the issue of the letters. The old arguments against an action were again pressed upon him. He insisted, on the other side, that he was not afraid of cross-examination; that they might cross-examine as much as ever they pleased, either about the doings of the Land League or the letters; that his hands would be found to be clean, and

the letters to be gross forgeries. The question between us was adjourned ; and meanwhile he fell in with my suggestion that he should the next day make a personal statement to the House.

The judicious reader will be able to compare, or contrast, Mr. Parnell's daring defiance of cross-examination, according to Lord Morley, with the totally opposite demeanour in the office of my solicitor which had weighed so heavily upon my case.

### *Mr. Davitt's Narrative.*

I have already made honourable mention of Mr. Michael Davitt for his single-handed testimony to the fact that, instead of there being anything sinister about my absence from the witness-box—there was something very sinister, but not on my part—it had all occurred with his cognisance and approval as well as with the cognisance and approval of other leading Nationalists who had assisted my plea. Mr. Davitt was by far the most honourable man among leading Parnellites and Land Leaguers with whom I ever had to do. In this matter, however, he showed the same curious discretion which marked all the party leaders, English party leaders and Irish party leaders, who had interfered in the case of *O'Donnell v. Walter*. Addressing a public meeting in Glasgow two days after the conclusion of my case, Mr. Davitt made this remarkable statement about Mr. Parnell, which the reader can also compare with the facts :—

Mr. O'Donnell is also blamed—especially by Mr. Parnell's friends in Ireland and Great Britain—for having followed a certain course during the hearing of his case. I feel bound to say that he pursued that course against his own judgment, on the advice, not of Mr. Parnell—*he had nothing to do with the case*<sup>1</sup>—but on my advice, and the advice of some other Irish

<sup>1</sup> In reference to this deliberate misstatement by Davitt, in his attempt to hide away something, I have another letter from my solicitor, on April 23, 1888, expressly stating: 'I have had two important interviews since last writing to you, one with Davitt and the other with Parnell. Mr. Davitt stated his principal object in seeing me was to get me into communication with Parnell' !!!



Nationalists who believed that the case would receive an impartial hearing at the hands of the judge.

What can have been the secret consciousness which caused the Parnellites to conceal, and at all costs of veracity to continue to conceal, the fact that *they and they alone* had prevented my appearance in the witness-box, and had broken down my case in consequence; and, though the whole country was ringing with the basest mendacities against me on the side of the pro-Parnellite politicians and public, Mr. Parnell and his friends never once—with the single and limited exception of Mr. Davitt—had allowed a word of that plain truth to escape them which was so thoroughly known to them all? And Davitt also had felt bound by some secret fear or obligation to repeat the same downright falsehood as the others about the non-participation of Mr. Parnell in my case, and especially about his ignorance of the line of policy which was adopted and urged by himself and the whole of his leading advisers and guides, from Sir Charles Russell to Davitt himself. ‘Mr. Parnell had nothing to do with the case!’ In the web of lies which spread around me and my case from the first moment of my renewed contact with Mr. Parnell’s supporters, nothing impressed me more with a sense of *the utter rottenness of something unknown* than this inveracity of the courageous Davitt. Why was this mean and dishonouring fable being put about that Parnell had not been consulted, had not been humoured and followed in all his suggestions, with regard to the trial of *O’Donnell v. Walter*? Parnell was in daily communication as to the charges of the *Times* with Mr. John Morley. Did he deceive Mr. John Morley too? As for Davitt’s wretched fable that ‘Mr. Parnell had nothing to do with the case,’ why, Davitt himself was continually arranging consultations between Parnell and my solicitor. I have before me a casual letter from the latter on May 29, 1888—six weeks after Parnell had given his first list of suggestions for the conduct of the affair—mentioning in a postscript that ‘Davitt has just

been to say that he is going at once to see Parnell and will come to see me to-morrow, Wednesday, if necessary.' What was Davitt going to see Parnell about, and then to return and talk to my solicitor about? Not about the case?

In another letter from my solicitor on May 10, I find another interview with Mr. Parnell and an urgent request from Parnell to come to London at once. 'I have just had an interview with Mr. Parnell. He wished me to urge you strongly to return to London at once.' I was at the seaside, as my health was overworked. The solicitor adds: 'I am to see Mr. Parnell again on Tuesday.' *For weeks Parnell was in and out of the office every third or fourth day, or oftener.* And then comes the lying fable that Parnell was quite a stranger to O'Donnell's case, never knew anything about the fresh documents of the *Times* until they were suddenly read out by the Attorney-General! 'Never was so surprised in his life. Went to tell John Morley of his astonishment and indignation. Wanted to be cross-examined at once. Had no fear of cross-examination.' And all the time Parnell had studied the new documents in the office of Messrs. Soames, the solicitors of the *Times*, in company with my solicitor, Mr. Biale, and under an order of inspection obtained from the court by me. And all the time *Parnell had arranged with my solicitor that he was not to be called as witness* except in the utmost extremity, 'as he did not want to be cross-examined.' And Sir Charles Russell was also to make his entry into my case, without my knowledge, and was to persuade my counsel, *without my knowledge*, 'not to put O'Donnell in the box' either. And then Sir Charles Russell was to have the assurance to write to me, after I had discovered him, to assure me that all this 'keeping out of the box' had been arranged 'solely with a view to my best interest'! And my case had been broken down; and Parnell had run to Mr. John Morley, and others, we are told, to complain that he had wanted to be cross-examined above all things in the world; and Lord Chief Justice Coleridge had, in effect, told the jury that

I had kept out of the box because I was a hireling for the *Times*. What did it all mean, what does it all mean to-day? Why has every mention of the true facts been kept out of the most authorised records of those transactions almost as carefully as I was kept out of the witness-box? Who told Chief Justice Coleridge that I had never known Parnell; that I was an interloper 'for reasons which have remained obscure'; that I may have been a sort of a secretary for some sort of 'a branch' of the League or the Confederation; that the jury could not scout too quickly 'a man who had not gone into the witness-box'? *Who visited Lord Coleridge to tell him those things?*

Having placed the reader in the knowledge of who and what had interfered with the conduct of the case, of who and what had kept me out of the witness-box, and the wherefore of Mr. Parnell's not having been called a witness, I shall proceed to state the further history of what went on behind the scenes of 'Parnellism and Crime,' and of the Special Commission, as well as the innermost explanation of the mystery, the evasion, the manœuvres, and the inveracity which impeded inquiry into the relations between members of the Land League and members of the Invincible conspiracy. My case only served to illustrate the general methods which were at work.

I first became cognisant of Sir Charles Russell's interference with the conduct of my case 'solely for my best interest' immediately after my counsel had persisted in declining to place me in the box, even after the warnings of the Chief Justice. I had urged my counsel if he was sure that all was safe, and had been told that he had 'the very highest authority' for being confident that I could be called 'after the *Times* had shown its hand.' This was another of the phrases in circulation at that time in the camp of the Parnellites and their supporters. My solicitor had even been obliged to inform me that great ex-officials in the Irish administration had expressed their readiness to give evidence for me, but had begged not to be called 'before the *Times* had shown its hand.' *What did they*



*fear might be found in that hand?* At any rate, I was assured that there was the very highest authority. Suddenly I remembered that I had seen a note or letter making its way through the crowded court to my counsel, and it flashed upon me that the note had come from the part of the court where I had recognised the keen, determined features of Sir Charles Russell, 'the Attorney-General of the Land League,' and now really ex-Attorney-General in the late Ministry of Mr. Gladstone.

At the earliest moment I asked my able but junior counsel if the note was from Sir Charles Russell, and what on earth had he to say? I was then told that the ex-Attorney-General had sent for my counsel some days before, and after expressing his great desire to do something 'solely in the best interest of Mr. O'Donnell,' had pressed upon my counsel the absolute prudence and necessity of not putting Mr. O'Donnell in the box 'before the *Times* had shown its hand.' 'Call some witnesses to prove your case generally. Let the *Times* reply and call its witnesses. There must be a rebutting case, and then O'Donnell goes into the box. That is the only wise course.' Sir Charles also obtained my counsel's word of honour not to speak of his having seen the ex-Attorney-General in this matter. 'You see,' explained Sir Charles, 'I am technically standing counsel for the *Times*, but I could not act for them in a matter which touches my principles so closely. At the same time, it might not look well for me to have given advice to an opponent of the *Times*.' As, however, I had seen the coming of the note from Sir Charles that morning, my counsel owed me this full explanation. I felt fully how grateful my able but junior counsel must be at this powerful intervention 'solely for my best interest'; but I said plainly that I would rather take advice in the crisis from the Tory Attorney-General himself than from the ex-Attorney-General of the Gladstonian Home Rulers whom I had opposed by every means at my disposal. 'The note that morning,' I was further told, 'was a serious and solemn warning not to regard the warnings of the judge

even if they tended to have Mr. O'Donnell put in the witness-box before the *Times* had shown its hand.'

I exclaimed passionately that the case was hopelessly ruined, that there would be no rebutting case, no chance of entering the box, no chance of undoing the fatal mistake of following the directions in the morning's note from the ex-Attorney-General. I thanked my able young counsel. I was sure of his single-minded zeal. I gave Sir Charles Russell credit for the highest sentiments, for the most unselfish desire to aid me against the tremendous resources of the leading journal. But it was simply impossible for him, with his past and with my past, with his highest objects and with my highest duty, to look at the interest of my case as I regarded that interest myself. 'The case is as good as dead,' I repeated. 'I am stabbed by a blow in the dark, no matter how that blow was meant for my opponent.' The rest of that day, and till the end of the Attorney-General's harangue for the *Times*, I watched Sir Charles Russell with a sort of fascination. I expected, but I was struck profoundly all the same, to see the studied attitude of open admiration and apprehension with which he followed Sir Richard Webster's weighty address. I saw him sadly, sadly complimenting the *Times's* leader on the terrible eloquence of his proofs and his invective. Sir Charles's looks and gesture said plainly, what his words may have been saying vocally: 'What a marvellous man you are, Webster. I am grieved at the harm you are doing us, but I frankly admire you. Poor O'Donnell is not worth your powder and shot, and you have annihilated us. Parnell will never survive your magnificent denunciation. Never dreamed that anything could be so effective.' And I marked Sir Richard Webster's proud and happy smile. Russell had to acknowledge to him that the game was up, and such praise was praise indeed! Yes, the triumph was won. The *Times* was immortalised, like himself. O'Donnell was just blown away. There was nothing more worth doing against him. And the Liberals were dished by him, Sir Richard Webster. So Sir Richard

Webster loftily declared that this plaintiff was not worth more notice. The *Times* would not trouble to call witnesses. Sir Richard Webster was satisfied indeed. *But so was Sir Charles Russell.* I never saw a pair of keen Irish eyes dance with fun more gaily than danced the eyes of Charles Russell of Dundalk as the leading counsel for the *Times* put an end to the case without witnesses or the possibility of counter testimony 'after the *Times* had shown its hand,' without the possibility of anybodies being put in the witness-box *who strongly objected to cross-examinations.*

I had seen a finer game played. The feinting appeared to me distinctly violent and obvious. But it served the occasion. After all, you adapt your means to your ends and to the circumambient medium. I nearly laughed with the laughing eyes of the crushed, the overwhelmed, the hopelessly beaten Irish rival of the great Sir Richard Webster. Then I thought bitterly and briefly that I must make a final fight myself, without any able and candid counsel. If I told what I could tell now, as an introduction to an appropriate analysis of the great oration of the *Times's* leading counsel, nothing could stop me from addressing the jury if I dismissed and thanked my advocate, who had been only unfortunate. I liked the jury. I could make them understand. That I was quite sure. And I could make many millions of people understand, whatever came of the formal verdict, of which I despaired by no means on these terms. I rather like difficulties. Yes, I would do it. I should have no counsel but myself now. And suddenly I thought . . . ! 'By the Lord God of Sabaoth! *Parnell knows something damnable.* He is not *in* it. But he *knows* it. And I do not know how far it extends, nor whether the innocent might not suffer with the guilty. Why have I been kept out of the box? Why will none of them go into the box? "Until the *Times* shows its hand!" No, I could not risk it. After all, the *Times* had sworn all its affidavits that it never meant *me.*' I had forced it to that anyhow. In the sea of lies which was overwhelming me—lies, collusions, abuse



of the machinery of justice—I could hardly breathe. But what did the liars fear with such deadly fear ?

### THE SPECIAL COMMISSION

The Special Commission was to be a farce, after what I had so lately read in that couple of laughing glances of a great Irish advocate in a crowded apartment of the Royal Courts of Justice. It was a most instructive farce, though, before the curtain was rung down, the proprietors of the *Times* had paid somewhat dearly for their wild Irish syndicate and for the magnificent triumph of their leading counsel 'in the absurd case of *O'Donnell v. Walter*, you know.' Where was Randolph Churchill when his party granted the Special Commission ? Politically suicided, of course ! Since two years before, of course, of course. And so Marshall and Snellgrove granted the Special Commission. It was a royal time for the Leagues and the lawyers ; and the Right Hon. Sir Charles Russell, Q.C., M.P. and Gladstonian Home Ruler, was simply all in his glory. Three judges without a jury, who are told that they are only trying a revolution, could not feel quite in their element, could not do anything as they had been accustomed to do it. And there was the *Times*, artfully loaded down with sorry Sinbad Pigott on its back !

Davitt repeatedly informed me that he had been the chairman of a sort of Board of Emigration during the Special Commission, which had spent £6000—I am quite certain that the sum was £6000—in persuading undesirable persons to depart hastily for distant shores where touters for testimony are unbacked by Scotland Yard, and where the Queen's subpoenas are at rest. If all the informers in the world had placed themselves at the disposal of the *Times*, I doubt if—outside of the one question—it would have mattered twopence to the intelligent public. Had Parnell, the most cautious of men, committed the mysterious idiocy of signing his name to a vulgarly expressed edition of a favourite Land League sentiment—'Pity Lord Freddy was killed too, but as for the other ?'—had Parnell

done that unimaginable absurdity? There was the obsessing problem of good and bad society in the winter of 1888 and 1889. If Parnell did not commit that bit of bedlamism, then all was well with Pat Ford and Pat Egan! You might rank Maamtrasna with Marathon, and class the murderers of Lord Mountmorres with Harmodius and Aristogeiton. 'The blood that has been shed, was it then so pure?' Murders did not matter! So when greedy, needy, lying Pigott was shown to be greedy, needy, lying Pigott, the public opinion of half England and three parts of Ireland cried out quite cheerfully and enthusiastically: '*Causa finita est*'; and Mr. Gladstone got up in the House of Commons and made his best bow to Mr. Parnell, whom he was to hunt into broken-hearted ruin in a few months. How beautiful may be public opinion!

I have never heard that either Gladstonians or Parnellites ever concealed their view of what the Special Commission was worth to them, or what any tribunal whatever was worth on a question of whitewashing the Land League. The painstaking biographer of Mr. Parnell, Mr. Barry O'Brien, certainly does not conceal it. Outside of the forged letter, nobody, Parnell least of all, paid the slightest attention to such minor matters as outrage and conspiracy.

Parnell concentrated all his attention on the facsimile letter. The general charges against the League were, in his opinion, ancient history, scarcely worth discussing, and certainly not worth the lawyers' fees which had to be paid for dealing with them. 'If,' he argued, 'we can prove the letter to be a forgery, *everything else will go by the board*. If we cannot prove it to be a forgery, then, no matter what may be the finding of the commission on the general issue, we shall stand condemned. We must put the man who forged that letter into the box and wring the truth from him. Our victory will then be complete.'

It was perfectly true. Provided that it was not shown that Parnell had crudely expressed sympathy and delight at the Phoenix Park murders in a written communication to some unknown ruffian, then all the alleged abominations which had roused Mr. Gladstone to employ 'the

resources of civilisation' were become simply a clean slate! Mr. Gladstone, above all, accepted this remarkable conclusion. Mere Irish patriots vainly inquired why this should be. We had insufficiently realised the hidden beauties of the system of party government. Before Parnell had become an integral unit on one side of the system, he could be taken by the collar, without trial or sentence, and put into jail *à discretion*. To-day it was different. Since Mr. Parnell had authorised Mrs. O'Shea to assure Mr. Gladstone that he was sorry for past differences and really loved the Liberal party and its great leader, he had entered within the sanctuary. By the way, it is interesting how Parnell varied the choice of his plenipotentiaries. He sent Mr. T. P. O'Connor and Mr. Justin McCarthy to represent him in New York and Chicago. He deputed Captain O'Shea to sound Mr. Chamberlain. He reserved the fine intelligence of Mrs. O'Shea for an intellectual mission to Mr. Gladstone. Or did Mrs. O'Shea arrange all the variety and all the discrimination? If we had the private history of the Eltham diplomacy, I am pretty certain that it would be found that the highly gifted woman who was the Egeria of the member for Cork was the predominating partner of most of his political ideas in the post-Kilmainham period of his career.

As a matter of fact, the Special Commission, conceded by the Conservative Cabinet of the year 1888, advised by Sir Richard Webster after his characteristic triumph in my case, was as admirably contrived to muddle everything and confuse everything as if it had been advised by Sir Charles Russell himself. That eminent practitioner had himself determined to come out of the shade of underground suggestion, and to throw off the disguise of a standing counsel to the *Times*. The Special Commission gave a royal chance to verbose and eloquent lawyers. It was all about Ireland, which nobody understood in England, which nobody on the Parnellite side wanted to be understood. But there was a supple wrestler ready at length to jump upon the open scene. Having finished his survey of the



ground which he had so cautiously prepared, armed with all the clues to Pigott's identity which Parnell had derived from the inspection of the composition and orthography of the documents in the case of *O'Donnell v. Walter*, empowered by the vague scope of the Commission to refer, or not to refer, to anything from the coming of Strongbow to the flitting of Egan, the great advocate, whom Parnell had brought into Parliament and into the road of a splendid career, now sprang into the lists to do battle with opponents whom he had studied and measured, and whom he knew to possess neither dangerous knowledge nor excessive skill.

Sir Charles Russell had held for years, as we know, a general retainer for the *Times*. This was the pretext that he had alleged for those subterranean manœuvres 'solely with a view to my best interest,' which he had endeavoured to conceal as carefully from me as from the proprietors of the *Times*, which had saved Parnell from all danger of cross-examination, and which had produced the collapse of my case; while, of course, the Liberal and Parnellite press declared that my non-appearance in the box was perfectly scandalous, and Sir Charles Russell discreetly allowed them to say so. The assassination of my case in the first week of July 1888 produced, as we know, the further developments which had produced the Special Commission. Russell now saw that his opportunity for saving both Parnellism and Liberalism was at hand, that he held his unsuspecting opponents in the net, and, according to his biographer, Mr. Barry O'Brien, he intended at once to return his general retainer. It was still possible, however, that the investigation might have taken a less elusory and circumambulatory form; and Sir Charles Russell waited for final information. At length all former indefiniteness was removed, and the beautiful indefiniteness of the actual Commission presented itself to the delighted contemplation of the astute watcher behind the hedge. To follow the narrative given by his semi-official biographer, who has had the pleasure of being the ecstatic commentator of the lives of both Russell and Parnell, the moment had

come for finally throwing off the mask of an advocate for the leading journal. He had worn it long enough for his ends, and so Sir Charles Russell wrote to Mr. Soames, the *Times's* solicitor, on July 16 :—

It has become clear I cannot continue to hold the *Times's* general retainer, and I feel sure you will agree with me it ought to be considered at an end. . . . *The proposed Bill of the Government and the forthcoming discussion upon it, and consequent upon it, render the course I now take absolutely necessary.*

Pressed by the *Times's* solicitor for a clearer explanation, Sir Charles Russell, on September 7, at length replied overtly that he 'desired to appear for the Irish party on the Commission.' He would have been more accurate by stating that he was going to appear above ground on behalf of the Land League.

What can have been the motive of tremendous gravity which can adequately explain all this secret, subtle, and tortuous activity on the part of so grave, so acute, so self-restrained, and so far-seeing and far-reaching a lawyer and politician? It must have been a motive of tremendous gravity, and it must have been a motive which a man of conscience and feeling like Sir Charles Russell must have considered to be a weighty and worthy motive. I did not approve of a great deal of Charles Russell's championship of the Land League, but it was certain that he was a convinced and earnest champion. I had bitter cause to condemn and detest his underground interference in the case of *O'Donnell v. Walter*, but it was clear to me that no slight or trivial causes could have moved him to a line of conduct which involved, as actually happened, the ruin of my claim, and—had I been a less-known man—the blackening of my name. In making his prevention of Parnell's appearance, even his possible appearance, in the witness-box—'before the *Times* had shown its hand'—a preparation for subsequent strategy, and in now dropping the mask and openly leading a deadly attack upon the *Times*, Sir Charles Russell must at all events have been actuated by reasons which seemed to him to justify such

extraordinary and unprecedented proceedings by an ex-Attorney-General of England. At all events, the whole complexity of sinister-looking circumstances had convinced my solicitor and myself that something so grave as to make concealment a matter of the grimmest earnest could alone explain the anxiety, and more than anxiety, of Parnell, the deliberate misrepresentations of Davitt, and the nervous unrest and sleepless and surreptitious vigilance of Sir Charles Russell. Had not Davitt stated that 'Parnell had no connexion' with my case, though Davitt himself used to arrange visits of Parnell to my solicitor! My views upon several of the surroundings of Mr. Parnell, and on Parnell himself, had decidedly altered since first I issued my indignant action for libel against the *Times*. If I had to begin that action again, no member of Parnell's party, including Parnell, would have been allowed under any pretext to enter the inner office of my solicitor.

A very strange and suggestive incident had happened over the inspection of the documents in possession of the *Times*. Down to the actual inspection of these documents by Mr. Parnell and my solicitor, nothing could exceed the zeal and attentiveness of Mr. Parnell in everything relating to the case. Once he had examined 'the *Times*'s hand,' he became apathetic, distant, fugitive, being finally brought into court as a witness of the most reluctant character by being served with a *subpœna*! Pure comedy, it may be said. But why? Against whom was Parnell taking precautions, now that he knew from inspection of the *Times*'s documents that nothing worse existed against him than had been already published as the notorious facsimile letter, better known since as the forged letter? Against whom was he preparing the farce of 'being forced by *subpœna* to attend and give evidence'? For whose benefit did he want to be able to say that, in case of the plan to break down the case of *O'Donnell v. Walter* not succeeding, and in case of dangerous disclosures leaking out under cross-examination, 'at any rate he had only gone into the witness-box under legal compulsion, and had not



voluntarily helped any investigation'? If the person, who was in danger of being discovered, could also be shown to be the real master of the League, the prudent reluctance of Mr. Parnell was completely explicable. So we had this farce of Parnell waiting for a *subpœna* before entering the court as a witness. Of course, entering the court at all was also a farce, if Parnell was aware, *as he must have been aware*, of the efforts of some of his protectors to render impossible the hearing of witnesses at all.

As for Parnell's anxiety to inspect the documents in the possession of the *Times*, there could be no sort of doubt. 'Get an order of the court for inspection of the documents' was one of the very first requests in his list of instructions to my solicitor on April 13. As he was accompanying my solicitor to the office of the *Times*'s solicitor, his anxiety approached distress. When he had perused all the new matter which the wild Irish syndicate imagined to have supplied corroboration of the facsimile letter, but which was only still sillier fabrications of the ridiculous Pigott, the conspicuous relief in Parnell's face became almost ecstatic. It was quite impossible for us not to notice and commentate among ourselves the anxiety of Parnell to see the new material, and the evident exhilaration which followed the inspection. 'He must have been horribly afraid of finding something disagreeable.' Most assuredly I felt convinced that Parnell had not feared to find any damaging matter really emanating *from himself*. That was to me absolutely unthinkable. His master quality was caution in shady company or shady business. He was so cautious that it was practically impossible to make him admit even the existence of anything shady. He ignored it. But now he had been in painful fear, *fear which he had been unable to hide*, of finding something very unpleasant in the new material of the *Times*. Why? Others might not have been so circumspect in writing to him. When he saw what the *Times* really had, he laughed with a happy sense which

knew alarm no longer. But what *might* he have found ? Suppose it had been a letter from Patrick Egan, for instance, addressed to him in some such terms of confidential esteem as Egan was accustomed to use towards the arch-assassin James Carey, for instance, containing warm thanks for support or opportune assistance, or opportune information ? Suppose that such a letter of gratitude and intimacy from Patrick Egan coincided in date with Egan's hurried flight from Ireland on the exposure of the assassination conspiracy by James Carey's information, when anything might be dreaded from further information by James Carey ? Suppose that similar proofs of continuous intimacy and confidential relations had been found to exist in any other correspondence with Parnell from the man who might be proved to have been the original founder of the assassination conspiracy ; who had paid £5000 to ' Number One ' to start that conspiracy and to enroll and support its cohort of braves ; who had fled from Ireland as soon as detection and arrest seemed imminent ; who, notwithstanding those circumstances, had continued to enjoy the co-operation of Parnell in matters of general policy beyond the seas, continued to be a leader of the oversea confederacy which financed Parnell and his followers ; who rose, in fact, to the highest authority in that league of financial aid and political co-operation ? Would not correspondence of that kind *to* Parnell have been only one degree less dangerous than the proof of being an accessory *before* the fact ? Yet that man existed ; that man not only existed, but still controlled immense funds which were at the service of Mr. Parnell ; that man had risen to open supremacy in the body which supplied Parnell with the whole of his means of propaganda and leadership and political existence. No compromising correspondence from that man to Parnell had actually come into the possession of the *Times*. But if that man's hideous and inhuman guilt had happened to be revealed—as it could easily have been revealed—in the course of the Special Commission, in the course of a Crown

prosecution, what effect might the slightest scrap of intimate correspondence from him to Parnell have had upon the public alliances of Parnell? That Parnell feared acutely lest something might exist which was at least open to serious criticism was as clear as day. His personal innocence might easily be inadequate to outweigh too compromising intimacies, even though he had not written a line himself. And the anxiety, the feverish energy, the underground tactics of the great lawyer? He had been, ever since they launched him on the parliamentary path to his high eminence, the close counsellor of the Parnellite leaders; and the Parnellite leaders were the stipendiaries of many men who openly avowed that neither a score of Phoenix Park butcheries nor the conflagration of London would excite their keen regrets and sorrow. We may confidently presume that Russell—a gentleman without blame—endeavoured to keep Parnellite politics, so far as advice could effect it, absolutely pure of the natural consequences of that impure collaboration. A skilled and trained intelligence like his, nevertheless, skilled in criminal as in civil case law and practice, must have derived from countless opportunities of observation glimpses of possible dangers which might escape more obtuse intelligence. Why might not he be intensely alarmed, when even the studied equanimity of Mr. Parnell had broken down under the stress of something more than curiosity? Let us not forget that Sir Charles Russell was a Liberal of the highest and most loyal type. Let us not forget that nobody could have realised more acutely than he how much of the reputation of the Liberal party in the years 1888 and 1889 depended upon the reputation of the Parnellite party, at least as regards the association with intimates of blood and butchery. Would he not feel bound, stimulated as he was by his exceptional knowledge of what might occur behind the scenes of Parnellism and Crime, to put forth all the resources of his extraordinary skill, his marvellous and penetrating subtlety, to ward off, by every means in his power, even the possibility of stain from the Liberal party of which he was



so proud, and from the grey, illustrious head of the great leader of Liberalism, who had taken to his arms with such enthusiastic generosity that Irish cause which Parnellism might carry to victory or might plunge in shame? Sir Charles Russell knew more about the Parnellite party than a hundred other politicians or statesmen; more than they separately knew themselves. All his actions at this period attest that his superior knowledge had brought him no superior tranquillity of mind nor confidence. His solemn and secret adjuration to my counsel: 'Never put O'Donnell into the box until the *Times* has shown its hand.' His determination to keep Parnell out of the witness-box altogether; until the necessary preparations had been made, and until a less dangerous tribunal than a jury had been assured; was certainly not assumed for Parnell alone. Sir Charles Russell had made himself the guardian angel of the Liberal party.

The enormous mass of testimonies and observations which had accumulated in the course of the proceedings connected with the case of *O'Donnell v. Walter* leave me no alternative, if I am to be a conscientious historian at all, but to make use of them when they apply. A very strange and sinister occurrence which had startled us in that case may be cited here, in illustration of the extraordinary efforts of unseen agencies to prepare a verdict by manipulating or suppressing evidence or possible evidence. There had come into existence a new sort of hunt, giving a new sort of law to the hunted, and served by a new sort of servants, engaged not in stopping the earths, but in opening every possible exit and facility for the escape of vermin. In the course of my case we felt ourselves at every moment under the eyes of a strange kind of watchers. I have mentioned that Davitt had mentioned to me the usefulness of a sort of Emigration of Witnesses Promotion-and-Reward Society, whose special function was to induce certain persons to leave the country, and to keep out of the country, till they could be no longer in any danger of being tempted or forced to enter the witness-box. In Mr. Barry O'Brien's 'Life

of Parnell,' vol. ii, pp. 220-6, the story is told of the efforts which centred round the notorious P. J. Sheridan, an influential organiser of outrage under the League, a member of the Invincibles, and a dynamite advocate who had fled to America. This man was said to be in the market; and the *Times* had sent an agent to secure his confession, if possible. Mr. Barry O'Brien narrates how, first, all the telegrams between that agent in America and the *Times* were tapped in the Posts and Telegraphs, and secondly, how the Parnellites promptly sent an agent to America to counteract the *Times*. 'The telegrams, as I have said, fell into the hands of the Nationalists. An agent was sent at once to New York to see Sheridan.' The Parnellites did not send their agent to advise Sheridan to recross the water and to tell all he knew. Certainly not.

Here I may relate the strange and sinister occurrence to which I have referred. There was an old Fenian in the east of London, a shoemaker by trade, named Maurice Collins, who was reported to have furnished the leather sheaths of the murder knives used by the Invincibles. I knew him as a very simple and honest old man, a fiercely-convinced Nationalist, a good helper of every sort of friendly and charitable work among the Irish poor. My solicitor thought it advisable to take his evidence, and here is a copy of the proof. The *Times* had mentioned that there had been an attempted testimonial or fund for Collins, when he, in turn, fell into temporary poverty.

#### PROOF OF EVIDENCE.

MR. MAURICE COLLINS, *Shoemaker*,  
29 EAST MOUNT STREET, WHITECHAPEL.

About the beginning of 1882 or the end of 1881 a man called upon me representing himself a student at the London Hospital. He brought with him six or eight knives of the kind known as surgical or amputating knives. He wanted leather sheaths made for them and gave me the order to make them. They were made in my workshop, where I had at that time fourteen or fifteen men employed. He called again in about a fortnight

for the knives and the sheaths, and I handed him the parcel containing them and he paid me my bill, which was about £1. I did not know him otherwise than as a customer, and I had had frequently to do similar jobs before.

The testimonial referred to in the *Times* never came to any substantial result, but was entered upon by a Committee in London who took the matter up as a recognition of my services in visiting the various prisons where Irish political offenders were confined.

I knew Frank Byrne well. He was one of the treasurers of the 'Maurice Collins Testimonial Fund.' I knew the offices of the National League of Great Britain, and never saw *the parcel* I handed over to the man whose name I knew, nor any other kind of parcel containing weapons there.

I have already mentioned that a Dr. Hamilton Williams had obtained the surgical knives, to be used as formidable daggers or short swords by the assassination conspiracy. Old Maurice Collins, who knew me when I was a vice-president of the association for an amnesty to the Fenian prisoners, told me that he understood that the Invincibles meant to arrest Mr. Forster or Lord Cowper, and keep their hostage in confinement until Parnell and his colleagues had been released. Collins himself never was an Invincible. Neither my solicitor nor myself believed that Collins knew no more about the 'student at the London Hospital' than he professed in his proof of evidence. But Maurice Collins had been watched. Some person or organisation feared that his evidence might lead to disclosures. The old man wrote my solicitor the following note in great alarm:—

29 EAST MOUNT STREET, WHITECHAPEL, E.:

July 1, 1888.

DEAR SIR,

Two gentlemen called on me last Friday night late, and said they came from you to send me out of the way, as the *Times* would put me in the box. I will call to-morrow, Monday, at one o'clock to see you at your office.

Yours very respectfully,

MAURICE COLLINS.



The ignorant old workman regarded the danger of being called 'by the *Times*' as at once fraught with unknown terrors and as marking him out 'as an informer' to his co-Nationalists. It was useless to try to explain to him that, if called by me, he would be much more severely handled in cross-examination. The persons who wanted to frighten him out of the way had hit upon the one threat which terrified the old Fenian by its possibilities of dishonour as a 'witness for the enemy.' We could get no clue to the persons who had pretended to speak in my name; and I heard that old Collins stole away on foot as far as Birmingham in order to prevent 'the *Times* putting him in the box' against the Land League. He did not conceal his conviction that the 'student at the London hospital' had come to him with the requisite authority 'from the men beyond,' and that the knives 'might' be wanted for soldiers of the cause. As the old man's knowledge and reticence would be equally helpless before cross-examination, it was obvious that any persons who feared disclosures acted prudently in frightening Collins away from the neighbourhood of the witness-box. The confederacies for preventing evidence and removing evidence which had ruined my own case naturally disposed me to expect that it would be at least similarly active, and on a larger scale, in the interval between my case and the Special Commission.

When Sir Charles Russell rose to deliver his great speech in glorification, rather than in exculpation, of Parnell and the League, the way had been already made smooth for him by all manner of open and occult events. The case of the *Times* had been handled just in the way which suited the great Irish advocate. First, Sir Richard Webster had opened with the immovable confidence born of his great exploit against me. He had only to expose, with suitable dignity, the blessings of British rule in Ireland, landlords included, and the gratuitous and malevolent operation of the wicked League. There was no concentration of attack or exposition. Sir Richard undertook to indict what Lord

Morley calls 'a revolution'; and in a revolution there is always something to urge for the revolutionaries. A politician who ordered his fellow-countrymen to be 'treated like the lepers of old' would be quite horrible in ordinary politics; but call him a revolutionary leader, and you can at least say that the boycott was quite merciful compared with the guillotine. All Sir Richard Webster's sesquipedalian denunciation sounded, besides, dreadfully like a rehash of his former requisition when he had declined to call witnesses to support it before a jury. Sir Henry James's indictment of the League was on a far higher level of proof, and displayed immense and accurate knowledge of a grisly epoch, illuminated by vivid sketches of acts and individuals; but it, too, was the indictment of a revolution. Two or three definite charges against definite personages, supported by the immense array of evidence which Sir Henry James had preferred to march all over a vast field of operations, were entirely wanting. Sir Henry James had always shown a tendency to drown his cases in his developments, and he seemed to many critics to drown it in the present instance.

Then had come the stage-managed case of the irrelevant and pitiful Pigott. Sir Charles Russell had come to the cross-examination admirably armed against a far more formidable adversary. He had all the revelation of 'the hand of the *Times*' which he had obtained from the underground manipulation of the preliminary affair; and he had a mass of particular revelations concerning wretched, blackmailing, lying and starving Pigott which had been contributed by Patrick Egan, late of Dublin and Paris, and by the Most Rev. Archbishop Walsh of Dublin, now in 1910 the Chancellor of the new Government University in Ireland! Even if Pigott's silly forgeries had been genuine and authentic documents, the fact that Pigott produced them would be fatal in the eyes of an ordinary jury. In the strong and skilful hands of Sir Charles Russell, the miserable Pigott became a wreck, a worm. He had lied and forged for bread and meat. Probably he could not see the great

iniquity of attributing to the chief of the League sentiments and expressions which you could hear in every meeting of Leaguers from Maamtrasna to Westminster and the Avenue de Villiers. Lord Frederick's death was 'a regrettable accident,' but as for the killing of the Under Secretary, 'he only got his deserts.' If Mr. Forster had been killed, as was so often intended or attempted, it would not have been 'regrettable' at all. Irrelevant Pigott rushed in odd despair out of the Commission, out of London, off to Spain, and seeing, it is said, prison or a surgical knife in every broken dream, blew out his brains. Then powerful organs of opinion, powerful politicians, got up and shouted deliriously: 'The League is whitewashed and Parnell is a calumniated hero.' Who terrified Pigott?

Sir Charles Russell rose at last to reap the harvest of his work, and to complete the rout of an outmanœuvred enemy. He gladly treated the whole affair as the indictment of a revolution. 'Yes, the Land League was a revolution, and a beneficent and wonderfully moderate and gentle revolution.' Then Sir Charles Russell was launched on the broad ocean of comparative Irish history, in which he had been carefully coached for the occasion; as outside of his profession, Russell was even as Parnell. The Land League had been accompanied by outrages. But it was the situation and not the League which had produced the outrages. And how few were the outrages in comparison with the horrors of former times! The Attorney-General of the Land League led the Commission to the Whiteboys, to the Rapparees, to the Terryalts, to the Ribbonmen. He almost made men feel the painful remissness of the League in being merely accompanied by a couple of thousand outrages per annum, when it could have achieved ten or twenty thousand. Mr. Patrick Egan and Mr. Patrick Ford might have exclaimed on reading the palinode and panegyric of the great advocate: 'By Heaven, we are surprised at our own moderation!' Then came the irrelevant and dignified and melting peroration:—

My Lords, I have come to an end. I cannot sit down



without expressing the obligation I owe to your Lordships, not only for an attentive, but an indulgent hearing. I have spoken not merely as an advocate. I have spoken for the land of my birth. But I feel, and profoundly feel, that I have been speaking for and in the best interests of England also, where my years of laborious life have been passed, and where I have received kindness, consideration, and regard, which I shall be glad to make some attempt to repay.

My Lords, my colleagues and myself have had a responsible duty. We have had to defend not merely the leaders of a nation, but the nation itself—to defend the leaders of a nation whom it was sought to crush ; to defend a nation whose hopes it was sought to dash to the ground. This inquiry, intended as a curse, has proved a blessing. Designed, prominently designed, to ruin one man, it has been his vindication.

Russell had *not* defended the leaders of a nation ; but the organisers of a populace, a populace drenched with foreign dollars, brutalised by murderous incitements, stimulated by material bribes. Russell had *not* defended a nation ; but only an agrarian rising, without one sentiment of historical right, without one concern for the union of Irishmen. ' The leaders of a nation ! ' O'Neills, and O'Donnells, and O'Moores, and O'Kavanaghs ; Grattans, and Burkes, and Charlemonts ! August, immortal memories ! Pat Egan, and Pat Ford, and Pat Sheridan are also ' leaders of a nation ' !

It would be a merciless opponent, indeed, who could grudge Mr. Gladstone his triumph at Sir Charles Russell's exaggeration of Pigott and loud exculpation of Parnell ; and even the most irreconcilable adversary might admire the promptitude and perfection of the scene-mounting and the scene by which the old parliamentary hand transferred to himself the higher merit in the apotheosis of the uncrowned king. When Parnell entered the House shortly after the exposure of Pigott, he received a dramatic welcome. The dignified and venerable figure of Mr. Gladstone was seen to rise and bow towards the member for Cork. As Mr. Gladstone continued standing, the whole of the Liberals present imitated his attitude, and it was in the midst of this

unprecedented reception that Parnell, cold, calm, and unimpressed, proceeded to his seat among his cheering followers. As Lord Morley writes, 'Mr. Gladstone himself was in great spirits, mingled with intense indignation and genuine sympathy with Mr. Parnell.' It was a gallant and chivalrous display by the great old parliamentarian. But Parnell was quite perfectly aware that the exposure of the forged letter was almost as great a relief to his allies as to himself. He still failed to see why 'almost every Irish Nationalist, even in Cork, had a portrait of Mr. Gladstone in his house.' He could hardly have been more frigidly reserved if he had foreseen that within much less than two years Mr. Gladstone was to command the Irish nation to depose the excommunicate of the Nonconformist conscience.

It is perhaps time that the whole story of the origin and direction of the Invincible conspiracy should be exactly explained. Let it be said at once that all my sources of authority, from rough fanatics to members of the Supreme Council of the National Fenians, unite to convince me of the absolute accuracy of that saying of old Mr. Brady, the father of Joe Brady—one of the actual murderers of the Irish Secretary and Under Secretary—when I asked him about the Invincibles. 'Be certain sure of this, Mr. O'Donnell. There was no connexion between the men and Mr. Parnell. They took care of that. They broke down all the bridges that could lead to Mr. Parnell.' Very much the same thing could be said of all the outrage-mongers and perpetrators of crimes during the period when Parnell was in Kilmainham, from October 1881 to May 1882. 'All the bridges were cut that could lead to Mr. Parnell.'

When Parnell had successfully provoked Gladstone and Forster to imprison him and to suppress the Land League, his cynical prophecy that 'Captain Moonlight would take his place' naturally involved careful discontinuity with the organisations and proceedings of his lawless vicegerent. Mr. Patrick Egan, who had always been the real chief of

the Land League,<sup>1</sup> though Parnell might wear the crown and occasionally expound the methods, had promptly fled to Paris, in order to carry out in safety the disorganisation and intimidation of Irish rural society, which were necessary to prove that without Parnell Ireland was ungovernable. Egan had, in the first place, the American dollars, not far short of a million dollars during this Kilmainham period, to enroll and maintain the captains and soldiers of Yankee-Ribbon Jacobinism ; and he had the Ladies' Land League, thoughtfully invented by Davitt, for the purpose of replacing the imprisoned Leaguers and the abolished League in the sort of activity demanded by the situation, a revolutionary situation. As the provident inaction of the British Government was to distribute throughout Ireland without let or hindrance all the sums of money, all the cheques and remittances required for the incidents of the campaign, Mr. Patrick Egan was able to mobilise and pay the new forces of disorder required to assemble under the banners of Captain Moonlight . . . and other captains. £80,000 had been disseminated throughout Ireland through the female agencies by Mr. Egan before Mr. Parnell, on his liberation by the treaty with Mr. Gladstone, insisted on the summary liquidation of the Ladies' Land League, as being a dangerous superfluity since the accomplishment of its main object. If Mr. Parnell had been able to liquidate one or two other belated superfluities, the treaty with Mr. Gladstone would never have been imperilled by the horrors in the Phoenix Park. But it was a penalty of the policy of keeping eyes and ears shut, which Parnell had deliberately adopted, that, if it enabled him to ignore much unpleasantness, it also impeded his knowledge of many things which eventually

<sup>1</sup> The formidable qualities of Egan's abilities were well known and appreciated by all who were conversant with the realities of Irish history. He could do as much in a week as a score of ordinary politicians in a month or a year. A companionable, comrade-like man, he had the gift of getting work done without exciting opposition. The late Mr. A. M. Sullivan, M.P., bears tribute to his great powers in the well-known book, *United Ireland*. 'Mr. Patrick Egan seldom or never made a speech. He aspired to no display on the platform, but was the ablest strategist of the entire campaign.' Where public opinion is formed by talk, Egan was taken to be a subordinate !



crossed his purpose at critical moments. It was a cowardly policy at the best, which no leader of men could have adopted. 'You can raise Hell. I *will* know nothing about it. When Gladstone is frightened enough, I shall return as "Grand Pacificator."' If Mr. Gladstone eventually came to suspect the true inwardness of this system, perhaps we should cease to wonder at his keenness in jumping on his Irish ally as soon as he caught him in a real hole, which was not also a hole, like the indictment by the *Times*, for Mr. Gladstone himself. If Pigott had destroyed Parnell, there would have been destruction also at Hawarden. The O'Shea adventure smote Parnell alone. Mr. Gladstone hastened to use it to the utmost capacity of injury against his distrusted ally.

If nature and circumstances—incurable vacillation fostered by incurable disease, among them—had qualified Parnell for the part of Mr. Facing-Both-Ways, nature and circumstances had combined to make Patrick Egan the able schemer and desperate revolutionist who deserves, for ever, to head the list among Ireland's men of blood. Sober, patient, and domestic, passionately patriotic according to his rearing and education, strong of will and subtle of plot, Egan obtained influence as a Jew acquires wealth, by the effect of qualities which produce that result. After his flight to America even, he had not been twelve months president of the League organisations before he understood so well the value of the Irish American vote in the election of a President of the United States, that a Republican Cabinet, grateful for his detachment of an Irish contingent from their democrat connexion, appointed him to represent Washington as United States Minister to Chili. At Chili within six months his influence with the Dictator Balmaceda was so notorious that the graceful name of 'Balmaceda's Pat' attested the amused approval of his countrymen, while the contracts for Balmaceda's armies were reported to have been secured, prior to the triumph of the counter-revolution, by the Egan Sons.

From the first hour of the coming of the Land League

Patrick Egan had been its leader, manager, and ruler. Davitt was the more picturesque figure. Davitt was the platform orator and the theorising demagogue. The Triad which controlled the Land League were Davitt, Egan, and Brennan, who was the nephew of Egan. While Davitt inflamed the masses with denunciations of landlordism and promises of a new heaven upon earth, Egan worked the whole machine. Egan was the treasurer, and the money power was the supreme power. As treasurer his activity was omnivorous. Long before the management of the *Times* had entered into financial relations with Pigott the forger, that unprejudiced sponge had been the recipient of the benefactions of Egan. Pigott had an organ in the press which was worth some conciliation, and Pigott's views on conciliation were strictly monetary. He received from Egan, as Egan explained in 1881, 'the sum of £200 on condition that Mr. Pigott would give the League movement an independent support.' Independence on cash payment! Patrick Egan also advanced from the nascent funds of the nascent League the £2000—ten times the subsidy to Pigott—which formed the first contribution from the American dollars to the nascent fortunes of Mr. Parnell. 'On my making application to Mr. Egan for some money to pay the expenses of our campaign,' Mr. Parnell had subsequently to explain to the Special Commission, 'Mr. Egan took a large view of it, and gave me a cheque for £2000, which was about all we had for the election fight.' From Pigott to Parnell the assistance of the Land League treasurer moved with appropriateness and appreciation. During the subsequent campaigns of the New-Departure-Jacobins some £600,000 of American money were employed by Mr. Egan, practically at the sole discretion of Mr. Egan, in the manufacture of League enthusiasm, the defence of League criminals, and the encouragement of League agents and emissaries. I have never heard his financial integrity seriously impugned. The Russian Terrorists owned no purer devotee of a gospel of wrath and extermination. Egan is honesty itself, if the open expression of the most sanguinary

sympathies be honesty. He proclaimed the executed murderer Curley to be 'as sterling a patriot as ever died for Ireland.' He bubbled over with tenderness for another executed murderer, 'poor Joe Brady' who had been foremost in knifing the victims in the Phoenix Park. To Egan, James Carey, the arch-assassin and circumspect informer, was his 'dear James,' whom he helped with money to a seat on the Dublin corporation. Even amid the emotions of the tragedy, while Davitt, Dillon, and Parnell had published their loud appeal to the Irish race to bring to justice the assassins of Lord Frederick Cavendish, Egan stood aloof from any such weakness of sentiment, and in stern rebuke of a suggestion that the League should offer a reward for the discovery of the murderers, telegraphed from Paris to the *Freeman's Journal*, less than a week after the butchery: 'I am determined that if one penny of the Land League Fund were voted for such a purpose, I would at once resign the treasurership.' It may be argued that it required a minor courage, in view of British laws, to send that message from the safe retreat of Paris; but surely it showed a defiance of human feeling and civilised right almost amounting to audacity, to send that cynical menace from any site of civilisation whatever. With such antecedents the elevation of Patrick Egan to the highest honours of the American organisations which subsidised Parnell and the Parnellites was natural and laudable. The proud event occurred at the Boston Convention of 1884—only a year after his flight from justice. Patrick Egan was unanimously elected President of the United Leagues. Messrs. John Redmond, M.P., and Thomas Sexton, M.P., attended on behalf of Mr. C. S. Parnell, M.P., and in words which drew the long applause of the Convention, Mr. John Redmond, M.P., pronounced this soul-stirring allocution, solemn as the pledge of the young Hannibal against Rome: 'We will work as long as we have life for the consummation of that object for which our forefathers worked, until we have made Ireland a nation, and given her a harp without a crown.' Such were the representatives of Ireland whom the British Commons



and premiers have delighted to honour, while the comrade and patron of Dan Curley and James Carey and Joe Brady beamed approval from his chair of presidency! I—mere honest man—have had no share in the homages of British premiers. I remained a *Vox Clamantis* because I remained indomitably true to the principles of the great Irishmen who built the Irish Parliament House and filled it with immortal vindications of historic right. I remain a *Vox Clamantis* while the protégés and stipendiaries of President Egan of the Phoenix Park remain the counsellors and allies of British premiers as aforesaid.

It was immediately after the retirement of Parnell to the strategic retreat of Kilmainham, as already mentioned, that Patrick Egan gathered together the sacred band of James Carey and Dan Curley and Joe Brady and their fellow-chevaliers of the surgical knife. Pat Egan was the pious founder who endowed the Invincible Society of Political Assassins with £5000 from the treasury of the Land League. The Land League had been founded with the skirmishing fund for the destruction of cities in time of peace. It was a happy and consonant inspiration to found in turn the Invincibles with the Land League Fund. 'Number One' of the new organisation was Captain John McCafferty, formerly of Morgan's Guerrillas in the American Confederate Army, and subsequently a penal servitude convict for complicity in the Fenian insurrection. I have already reminded and warned my English readers that the bitterest, the most ruthless, the most desperate enemies of England would be found among the captive soldiers of Irish independence, who had risked their lives for their nation, who had forfeited their lives to the conquerors, but whom the conquerors condemned to the common hell of the garroters and the ravishers, the trust betrayers and the child defilers, in the vile, foul cells of English civil penitentiaries. In that Malebolge, along with those companions, the O'Learys, the Devoys, the McCaffertys, men as pure as Louis Kossuth and Giuseppe Garibaldi, had been sent for terms of years to trundle the stone-barrow and to

cleanse the ordure-bucket. When we record the desperation, let us not forget the provocation.

From all that I have gathered between the shores of the Liffey and the shores of the Hudson—from members of the Supreme Council and from Fenians in the ranks—it was Captain John McCafferty who broached the project of a society of avengers to the all-powerful treasurer of the Land League of Ireland in his Parisian sojourn. Men who were eye-witnesses have narrated to me the appearance of Captain McCafferty at the bar of the Dublin Criminal Court for the trial of the Fenian prisoners. Of middle height, lean and broad-shouldered, with keen, well-cut features and fearless eyes, he looked a model of the light cavalryman. His American comrades and enemies have attested that no bolder blade faced Phil Sheridan's riders in the cavalry war which enlisted so many daring captains of the Irish blood for the cause that was to lose as well as for the cause that was to win. By birth an Ohio man of Irish parentage, devoted to the land of his parents, the sight of the vast numbers of armed and disciplined Irishmen, numbering hundreds of thousands in the ranks of the Civil War, gave him, like millions of others, the hope that these martial legions might yet supply an army of liberation for Ireland. Entering the Fenian Brotherhood, he had hastened to these shores on the capitulation of Lee, had been arrested, but released in the absence of an overt act; had renewed his activity, had organised that daring raid on Chester Castle, which was to have surprised the castle and its thousands of rifles and munitions by converging bodies of Fenians from Wales, Cheshire, and Lancashire. Steamers were to have been seized, and a landing by several thousands of armed men, bearing other thousands of stands of arms, was to have been effected at Dublin. Then there was to be the insurrection. Large bodies of Fenians, including the commandos of Michael Davitt and John O'Connor Power, actually assembled in the neighbourhood of Chester; but the informer Corydon had given warning to the authorities, and the mad undertaking was frustrated without a struggle.

McCafferty then passed over to Ireland, but, dogged by the same watchers, he was arrested as he stepped from his ship into a boat to land him on the Irish shore.

The Irish American captain of cavalry was only twenty-nine years of age when he stood in the dock in Green Street court-house, Dublin, on trial for his life as a traitor. There were many suspicious circumstances, but only one witness, the informer Corydon, against him. The law of treason requires two witnesses. Isaac Butt defended him, and questioned altogether the legality of trying an American citizen who had not been in Ireland during the period of the attempted insurrection. Both the jury and the Court of Appeal concurred in finding him well and truly guilty of treason and levying war against the Queen. He was sentenced to death by hanging, drawing, and quartering. It was scarcely justice to the gallant criminal that his sentence was commuted to the merciless and abominable mercy of penal servitude for life along with the jail scum of the criminal population. When Mr. Gladstone, amid the generous applause of England, denounced the incarceration of the Neapolitan rebels in the prisons of King Bomba, he and generous England may have overlooked the contemporary English laws on political prisoners. At any rate, the sympathy in Ireland and America was profound and dangerous for the gallant young soldier of liberty, who had schemed so hopelessly, who had played his life so fearlessly, and who had spoken from the dock with the eloquence of a poet and the careless grace of a cavalier. There can be no human document worthy of profounder study by wise Englishmen than the speech on conviction for treason delivered in Green Street court-house by the fiery young captain of the Confederate Army who, after the devil's time in penal servitude, was to draw the moneys of the Land League for the organisation of gangs trained to murder Mr. Forster, to murder Lord Cowper and Lord Spencer, and that actually murdered the noble victims in the Phoenix Park. Let the reader place within his mental vision the picture of that young soldierly patriot, condemned to the medieval



savagery of the death for treason, and marked for the long horrors of the convict cell and chain. In answer to the formal question if he had anything to say why sentence should not be pronounced upon him, Captain John McCafferty—born in Ohio and aged twenty-nine—spoke as follows, according to the public journals of the time :—

My Lords, I have nothing to say that can, at this advanced stage of the trial, ward off that sentence of death, for I might as well fling my complaint (if I had one) at the orange trees of the sunny South, or the tall pines of the bleak North, as now speak to the question why sentence of death should not be passed upon me according to the law of the land ; but I do protest loudly against the injustice of that sentence. I have been brought to trial upon a charge of high treason against the Government of Great Britain, and guilt has been brought home to me upon the evidence of one witness, and that witness a perjured informer. There is but one witness to prove the overt act of treason against me. I grant that there has been a cloud of circumstantial evidence to show my connexion (if I may please to use that word) with the Irish people in their attempt for Irish independence, and I claim that as an American and as an alien, I have a reason and a right to sympathise with the Irish people or any other people who may please to revolt against that form of government by which they believe they are governed tyrannically. England sympathised with North and South America. She not only sympathised, she gave her support to both parties ; but who ever heard of an Englishman having been arrested by the United States Government for having given his support to the Confederate States of America and placed on his trial for high treason against the Government ? No such case has ever been. I do not deny that I have sympathised with the Irish people—I love Ireland—I love the Irish people. And, if I were free to-morrow, and the Irish people were to take the field for independence, my sympathy would be with them ; I would join them if they had any prospect whatever of independence, but I would not give my sanction to the useless effusion of blood, however done ; and I state distinctly that I had nothing whatever to do, directly or indirectly, with the movement that took place in the county of Dublin. I make that statement on the brink of my grave. I find no fault with the jury, no complaint against the judges. I will go to my grave as a gentleman and a Christian, although I regret that I should

be cut off at this stage of my life—still, many a noble Irishman fell in defence of the rights of my southern home. I do not wish to make any flowery speech to win sympathy in the court of justice. Without any further remarks I will now accept the sentence of the court. I will accept my sentence as becomes a gentleman and a Christian. I have but one request to ask of the tribunal, and that is, that after the execution my remains shall be turned over to Mr. Lawless to be by him interred in consecrated ground as quietly as he possibly can. I have now, previous to leaving the dock, once more to return my grateful and sincere thanks to Mr. Butt, the star of the Irish bar, for his able and devoted defence on behalf of me and my friends. Mr. Butt, I thank you.

I say that this is a human document on the Fenian insurrection worthy of the earnest consideration of the most Imperialist Englishmen. I say that there is no land on earth which could produce a nobler or more moving spectacle and sacrifice of liberty than this dying speech—he would have prayed for death rather than the chain-gang and the ordure-bucket of English mercy—this dying speech of the young and simple soldier. His solemn prayer for Christian burial of his remains, his courteous gratitude to his eminent counsel, his calm and dignified questioning of the legal validity of his conviction, his quiet resignation—all was worthy of a brave man and a good cause. Young Captain McCafferty was sent to penal servitude for life! For what? Fifteen years later, hardened and savaged by the loathsome and degrading tortures of the convict hell for many years, 'Number One' John McCafferty was recognised by one of my informants on board a steamboat from Ireland to England a few hours after the butchery in the Phoenix Park! What to that seared and blistered soul were Kilmainham treaties with the Mr. Gladstone who had only noticed the fate of the Fenian men as a reason for dis-establishing and disendowing some Church or other?

The £5000 which the Land League treasury placed at the disposal of the Assassination Society in the autumn of 1881, just after the gates of Kilmainham had closed on Parnell, were wanted, every penny, for the support and the

operations of the desperadoes, who now, for fifteen or sixteen months, were to infest all paths and purlieus of Dublin, to patrol the streets, to watch the trains and passenger steamers, to swagger in the public-houses, and to betray to the police by a hundred brutal gestures that something new and dangerous had come into action. All these men were poor. Carey, perhaps the least needy, had been helped into the Dublin corporation by a Land League contribution to his 'Dear James' from Dear Pat Egan. Dr. Hamilton Williams, Walshe, Byrne, all the accomplices in England were needy. Williams had lost or left his place as Medical Inspector of Coolie Immigrants at Demarara. But for the gift of the Land League treasury, the conspiracy could not have lived, nor taken trains, nor moved by jaunting-cars. It cost money to maintain that company of forty or fifty Dan Curleys, whom Egan was to praise whole-heartedly as 'none more sterling had ever died for Ireland.' Praise for the surgical knife from Patrick Egan—who also kept the sustentation fund for the lieutenants—was praise indeed!

Again I maintain, as I have always maintained, that Egan's Irish-American treasury was the sole efficient cause of the Land League and the Land League agitation. If the cheques had been stopped, had been prevented from being cashed, you might have had popular demands for necessary reform, but there would have been no league of social hate and greed from Malin to Helvick Heads. Is it not simply incomprehensible that a Government, claiming to defend Ireland from a foreign conspiracy and the war on civilisation by that foreign conspiracy, never—not even after the official suppression of the Land League—stopped the free entry, banking, cashing, circulating, of half a million of money, which that same Government alleged in Parliament every day of the week was being spent in the subornation, organisation, and defence of crime? As soon as Parnell got out of Kilmainham, having achieved his object of being accepted by Mr. Gladstone as the head pacificator of Ireland, his first step was to stop the bank credit of the Ladies' Land



League. He wanted no more Captain Moonlight. Captain Moonlight had done all that had been expected of him. The *locum tenens* was now *functus officio*. He had served his turn. When Egan at Paris heard that McCafferty's knives had cut to pieces Lord Frederick Cavendish, in defiance of the Kilmainham treaty, we are told that he almost fainted with emotion. This particular Captain Moonlight had refused to be regulated. He had refused to be timed. He had spoilt the whole calculation. But, for all that, Egan was not going to tolerate the payment of 'a single penny of Land League money' for bringing McCafferty's knives to an account. It was 'a regrettable accident,' but there must be no hanging, said Egan, for 'as sterling patriots as ever died for Ireland.'

It is no wonder that the protectors of the alliance between the Parnellites and the Liberals feared with a great fear for the consequences of cross-examination or, indeed, the consequences of any sort of testimony which could not be emigrated to join Pat Sheridan and Pat Egan beyond the Atlantic. I pass moral judgments as seldom as I can in the course of this delineation of strange events. One reason for my moderation is my knowledge of the intensity of the ignorance and the weakness of the characters which were to be found on every hand. Another reason is my knowledge of the measureless imbecility of the British administration of Ireland. The British mind only recognised the badness of Irish administration after it had broken down for a very, very long time. It was not the Briton who was suffering; and the Briton can be a whale, our Transatlantic cousins would observe, on patient toleration of the sufferings of other people. It is very horrible to record Parnell's acceptance of the worst situations created by subsidised outrage and intimidation; but, when once he was committed to the League, could he have made much opposition to the Egans and Fords? At all events, it seems unsatisfactory to blame Parnell utterly for tolerating without protest the worst operations of the League, when far greater sins of toleration were the daily use and wont of

the British Government in Ireland. There was not a single £5 note paid out to the trusty agents of the Land League which might not have been denied liberty to inflate, and inflame, and demoralise the rural population, and which might not have been seized or quarantined by the British authorities. 'Parnell accepted the situation, to say the least.' But the British Government accepted it little less thoroughly. Egan spent nothing short of £150,000 in remunerating the various forms of League atrocity during the imprisonment of Parnell in Kilmainham, during, therefore, the abrogation of the Constitution. The whole of those £150,000 had come to the various organisations throughout Ireland for purposes which the British Government openly denounced as grossly criminal and murderous; yet that British Government, though armed with all the powers of exceptional coercion and precaution, had not only allowed the distribution of this blood-money, but had itself kindly given it to the right hands by the postal service of the State! If Pat Egan in Paris had enclosed £100 in an affectionate note, such as he sent to James Carey the Invincible, saying:

DEAR MOONLIGHT,

Enclosed are a hundred pounds for the brave boys who help you in dealing with landlords and traitors to the cause. God bless the work.

Yours affectionately,

P. EGAN;

if the missive were properly addressed,

'CAPTAIN MOONLIGHT,

'Balliroe,

'Co. Mayo';

the British Government would see that it was carefully delivered, obtain a receipt, if it had been registered, and make the requisite entry in the post-office account. The utmost that could possibly happen to the League would be a communication to Mr. Forster from the Police Inspector,

Balliroe, to the effect that 'the police had reason to believe that large remittances had recently been made to a suspected person in this neighbourhood.' At this very time, for instance, Lord-Lieutenant Earl Cowper was reporting to Mr. Gladstone that 'he feared that the Ladies' Land League was devoting itself to the criminal practices of the suppressed Land League, and was in fact taking the place of the men.' But Lord-Lieutenant Earl Cowper never dreamed of interfering with the receipt by the Ladies' Land League of £80,000 from Patrick Egan at Paris for the special and notorious purpose of 'taking the place of the men.' What was Parnell's toleration of the Land League compared to this?

I could say more, much more. I may say that I know that Parnell was simply mazed at the perfect freedom enjoyed by the transmitters and handlers of the American money. He was so utterly amazed at the Government's toleration of Ford and Egan's subsidies, that he used to warn the Americans, at any rate, not to increase the risk by making extra-incendiary demonstrations at their conventions and dollar collections. Of course, it was hard for the more prudent Americans to obey this advice and at the same time to make profitable collections. The donors of greenbacks wanted at least hot-and-hot language for their money. As for the dependence in which the American money kept Parnell himself, by controlling and paying all the officers and sub-officers of his organisation, that was easy to see. If Parnell had his way, many changes would occur in the lists of his so-called followers. Even as regards his members of Parliament, it is well known to me and some others that Parnell was contemplating 'a Pride's Purge' of his loyal retainers, and a substitution in their places of more reputable personalities, just when Gladstone gave those loyal retainers the signal and encouragement for a revolt of the helots. Some of Parnell's later appointments to the representation of Irish constituencies had been viewed with grave disapproval by the very persons who soon jumped at the chance of removing him from the leadership. In fact, Parnell, having invoked a very noxious species of evil



power in order to put himself on top, feebly tried in vain to purify his retinue without the knowledge or vengeance of his former bodyguard. There were always in the Parnellite party men of unselfish devotion to Ireland who acted with Parnell, simply because there was no opportunity of acting with anybody else. But these were not the stalwarts of the League.

When we hear of the obtuseness of the Parnellite conscience in tolerating criminous connexions which ought to have repelled the least sensitive natures, I must, if I am to be a fair historian, ask in addition: But what of the sensitive consciences of Englishmen in connexion with criminous complicities? The poor devils of the party who lived on the subsidies of America, not over-courteously doled out by Biggar as treasurer of the party, had at least the palliation of indigence. But what of the well-acred gentlemen, the wealthy lawyers and merchants, who felt, or pretended to feel, that the exposure of Pigott's forgery gave a virginity of honour to the Parnellites with regard to matters of infinitely graver moment? Granted that Parnell had not signed a letter of somewhat coarse indifference to the fate of the two actual victims of the Phoenix Park, how trifling, petty, and insignificant that minor whitewashing was in comparison with the tremendous infamies which the three judges held to have been clearly established against the whole of the Parnellite and Land League confederacy?

We find the respondents guilty—

- Of coercion and intimidation against the payment of rent ;
- Of disseminating newspapers inciting to the commission of crime ;
- Of inciting to intimidation whose consequence was the commission of crime and outrage ;
- Of persisting in intimidation which led to crime and outrage *with knowledge of its effect* ;
- Of making payments to compensate criminals injured in the commission of crime ;
- Of inviting and accepting the co-operation and money of known advocates of crime and dynamite.

Here was a catalogue of legal and moral abominations imputed to the responsibility and perpetration of the Parnellite party ; and what was the result as regards masses of reputable Englishmen ? They declared that the government of the internal affairs of Ireland could be fully entrusted to these persons. They formed agreements of political partnership, intended to be permanent, with these persons. They invited these persons to every sort of social intimacy and social companionship. The Land League member of Parliament, whose evening-suit and white shirt and tie had been bought with the dollars of Pat Ford and Company, who himself had been declared guilty of infamous misconduct by three English judges, was invited to speak on English platforms, to dine at English tables, to form a fragrant ingredient in the union of hearts ! I express no further opinion. I register bare facts. But if Parnell tolerated criminals, what did whole classes of distinguished Englishmen tolerate ? I cannot see why the Parnellites should suffer a monopoly of censure in such matters.

What are the final conclusions ? Undoubtedly it was Parnell's own demeanour during my case against the *Times*—his alarm, his falsehoods, his fear of cross-examination, his pitiful anxiety ' to have the *Times* show its hand '—which first convinced me that he had a guilty knowledge of infamies. His warning to my solicitor, that the great Liberal officials who had been charged with the government of Ireland might refuse to give evidence under plea of privilege, did not weaken this impression. The peculiarly mean attitude of himself and his eminent allies, in pretending ignorance of the causes which prevented my being put in the box as a witness in my own behalf, seemed to involve a sort of general complicity in the work of falsehood and concealment that went far beyond the members of the Land League. For the moment I was unable to probe the mystery. On all sides I found a compact of resistance to investigations which included all sorts of influential personages. I was assured that far more than the repute or the necks of Irish traffickers in crime was at

stake. To-day, after comparing many contributions from many sources of information, I can scarcely improve on the clearness of that simple explanation of old Mr. Brady, the father of Joe Brady the assassin: 'All the bridges to Parnell were cut.' *But Parnell knew they would be cut, and could not be ignorant why they would be cut.* It was the dual strategy of the Land League, the dual leadership of the Land League: the parliamentary leader posing as the semi-constitutional intermediary between Downing Street and the conspiracy in Ireland and America; and Field-Marshal Moonlight commanding-in-chief in the campaign of intimidation, outrage, and general disgovernment which was to bring Downing Street to capitulation. When Parnell went to Kilmainham, he left all the forces and methods of disorder in the supreme control of Egan. Egan had a free hand, and a million of dollars. On him every agency of revolution depended. It was Parnell's part to ignore what many a lieutenant knew. 'All the bridges to him were cut.' He knew why. He was determined to know no more. He knew also that he could not stop a single outrage; because he was only a leader of any kind by the permission and appointment of Egan and Company. He knew that his utility began when his *locum tenens*, as he called him, had produced the requisite craving for pacification on the Treasury bench. Then the constitutional partner would be wanted—to arrange the terms of pacification! The Phoenix Park assassination naturally disturbed both Parnell and Egan. It was outside of the programme of the one and the ignorance of the other. Blundering fellows, who might have killed Mr. Burke long ago, who might have killed Mr. Forster long ago, had actually waited until Mrs. O'Shea had settled the pacification with Mr. Gladstone in person, in order to kill Lord Frederick Cavendish—'an innocent man'! Both Egan and Parnell almost fainted with annoyance at that clumsiness. Parnell denounced murder at last. Not only was it impossible to ignore it, but it had come near to spoiling everything. As Parnell said in



the House of Commons, only three weeks afterwards, in the full tenderness of his sorrow : ' I regret that the event in the Phoenix Park has prevented the right hon. gentleman from continuing the course of conciliation that we had expected from him.' But the course of conciliation soon continued, nevertheless. When I brought my action against the *Times*, when it seemed to be necessary to put a great number of persons of distinction or eminence in the box, a great political party stood to lose or win on the reputation of Mr. Parnell. All agencies, overground and underground—and not confined to the Land League—were then employed to smash my case, previous to the possibility of anybody's cross-examination.

In all this sordid story it must be said for Parnell that ' the bridges were cut ' between him and Egan's men ; that he found it easier to ignore his accomplices, because habitually they stank in his aristocratic nostrils, and because he was in Kilmainham. It was the lieutenants who kept in touch with the employers and paymasters, who foregathered with Egan in Paris and with Ford in New York. At least it can be said for Parnell that he kept his hands as clean ' as possible ' from those filthy grips and confidences. The lieutenants continued to hobnob and exchange confidences. Parnell would not betray Egan flying from justice, but never again did he seek personal contact with the crimsoned crew. *He sent the lieutenants.* In a political spasm of virtue Mr. Gladstone afterwards destroyed the ally and the ambassadress. But the lieutenants were again invited to govern Ireland !

All *that* lay behind the fear of what might be ' in the hand of the *Times*.'

## CHAPTER XXV

THE SESSIONS OF 1890 AND 1891—BEHIND THE SCENES OF THE  
DIVORCE COURT—THE CASE OF PARNELL AND MRS.  
O'SHEA—SENILE AMBITION AND VINDICTIVENESS—THE  
HIRED MEN'S REVOLT—TREACHERY AND TRAGEDY—  
THE CHURCHMEN'S CHANCE—MORE FANCY HOME RULE

Behind the Scenes of the Divorce Drama—The Tragedy of the Woman—  
The Wrath of the Man—Mr. Gladstone admires Vaticanism at last  
—The Desertion of the Lieutenants—An Abyss of Meanness and  
Dirt—From Glasnevin to the Second Bill for Gladstonian Home Rule.

BEFORE proceeding to describe the last scenes of all in the history of the Parliamentary party from Ireland between 1870 and 1890—the fall, the last struggle, and the death of him who had been the idolised Parnell—let it be permitted to me to speak, with the respect that is due to incredible misfortune, of the sad lady—whom all admit to have been highly gifted—who was the *Dilecta* of the ruined leader. A friend of mine who was present, when Katherine Parnell, formerly Katherine O'Shea, first knew that her hero, her lover, her well-beloved, was dead—dead, told me, with voice that shook at the memory, that never, never was more than mortal agony more wofully written and stamped on face of woman than on the face of her who had then lost all. She did not die on the spot ; but for years past there has dwelt in a private retreat down in sunny Devon the still living shape, bereft of mind, perhaps mercifully bereft, of Charles Stewart Parnell's white-haired widow. While she had to care for her growing children, she had attended to affairs, to her house, to business ; and then this end of sorrow was come.

I was introduced early in the 'eighties to Mrs. O'Shea by her husband ; and I remember once walking with them all



"VANITY FAIR" PORTRAIT OF MR. PARNELL.





the way from Hyde Park Corner to Pall Mall. I always liked O'Shea. Gay, an amusing rattle, a bright talker, an incorrigible diner-out, O'Shea was a thoroughly good fellow, of exceptional tact and ability when he took the trouble. I had talked most of the walk with Mrs. O'Shea, and I was struck by her clever conversation, while a little bored with her persistent questioning. She wanted to know everything about everything. She seemed to know everybody, but there were an infinitude of things, apparently, which she wanted to know or to know more thoroughly. She was very handsome, about thirty-five it seemed to me, but with that delicacy of feature and softness of charm which often reach their prime when more material types have already begun to pay the debt to time. But her intellectuality was slightly aggressive, and I felt that I could tire of it. Long afterwards I reflected that such a woman-friend could obtain and keep an absolute ascendancy over a man like Parnell, who, with many high qualities, was not precisely original, and who had very few intimates and still fewer friends. The rapid development of my own distaste for Parnellism would in any case prevent my knowing much more of Mrs. O'Shea. Captain O'Shea himself, though warmly attached to Parnell, whom he declared confidentially to want good advice badly, was never a Parnellite. He was a Home Ruler like the more Conservative followers of Mr. Butt, and detested violence. Though anything but a Radical, he had a strong leaning towards Mr. Chamberlain. I am perfectly certain that he trusted his wife and his friend Parnell with a whole-hearted confidence; and especially after the serious breakdown in Parnell's general health—a breakdown that totally invalided him for long months and years—Captain O'Shea was very much of a brother to the constant guest of his home. Even when everybody was talking gossip about Parnell and Mrs. O'Shea, based upon nothing more than the evident intimacy in a social sense of a handsome and distinguished man and a lovely and distinguished woman; even then nobody ventured to gossip to the husband, who went about his club and dining life

quite concerned for Parnell's health, and quite glad that 'poor old Parnell' could have a bit of quiet down at his little place. It is very often in these circumstances that unfaithfulness is slowly or suddenly created, and the husband is the very last to have reason to suspect. I have heard it argued that there was nothing harmful in the relations of Mrs. O'Shea and Parnell, until the furious brutality of the scenes at the Galway election of 1886, with foul-mouthed men casting worse than the mud of the streets at their chief, their colleague, and a refined woman, forced the pair to closer affection. At any rate, it was only in 1886 that O'Shea, though still confiding in his wife, felt that Parnell had not behaved well either to Mrs. O'Shea or to himself. O'Shea became simply furious when he saw the worst offenders return to the bosom of the party just as if the very vilest and most horrible blackguardism had never happened. As I have already pointed out repeatedly, Parnell had altogether ceased to command his precious party with any real authority; if indeed his authority had ever been anything more than the backing he got from the League. Now he only kept them together by promising them Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule, 'if they showed that they respected his authority.' O'Shea flung up his seat in Parliament, and heartily damned 'the whole disgusting lot,' by which he meant Mr. Patrick Ford's subsidised appendages. He wrote to me, saying that I had been 'the wisest man of all in cutting them long ago.'

One of Biggar's letters to me at this earlier period will show the persistent spirit of insubordination and calumny which had inspired the scandal of the Galway election. It was simply personal disrespect inflamed by ignorant mendacity. Poor Biggar had housed too long with the Leaguers. The letter is, besides, conclusive proof that the furious jealousies between the lieutenants, which the fall of Parnell was afterwards to reveal to all the world, were already in full swing. Notwithstanding the proverb, there very seldom is honour among the members of that sort of association. The references in Biggar's letter are noteworthy



for political reasons, when they relate to the great obstructionist's expectation, on the prospects of obstruction, that 'as a large number of new members, English, Irish, and Scotch, are willing to talk, if we encourage them according to the old plans, we can easily spoil the session.'

HOUSE OF COMMONS LIBRARY :  
*March 3, 1886.*

MY DEAR O'D.,

Your letter reached me on Monday last. Parnell made an unambiguous declaration he had Home Rule within his grasp and conveyed the impression very clearly he had a pledge from Gladstone through Lord Richard Grosvenor—a pledge of that sort is of course but little value, but it served its purpose with well-meaning, weak men both on the Parliamentary vote and the O'Shea election.

We have still the estimates for the year, and as a large number of new members, English, Irish, and Scotch, are willing to talk, if we encourage them according to the old plans, we can easily spoil the session.

We have plenty of personal jealousy between the different members of our party. I mean the prominent members. No doubt you can name them. Neither would like to see any other of their number leader, and this assists Parnell to hold his place.

It is thought by some that the Galway seat was a case of blackmail, O'Shea having possession of incriminating letters, and insisting on the seat to save exposure. All the time that Parnell was in Galway he held no personal intercourse with O'Shea, and only once did the latter appear on a platform with Parnell. He now votes regularly against the Irish party.

I am, my dear O'D.,

Yours sincerely,

JOSEPH G. BIGGAR.

When these miserable lies were in circulation, it was certain that anything might happen on the day when they came to the knowledge of Captain O'Shea himself. As a Catholic, and for the sake of his children, he would probably never have entered the Divorce Court, if it had not been for the infamous aspersions on his personal honour. For the rest, the attentive reader may note, that already in 1886

Biggar was writing about leading followers who wanted to be leaders instead of Parnell, whose place was, however, protected by the inability of his would-be rivals to settle their own internecine sentiments.

I do not think it necessary to recapitulate the facts or alleged facts in the action for divorce. Parnell had solemnly assured his friends and followers that he could triumphantly refute every accusation. Suddenly, in spite of the advice of his solicitor, he refused to defend the case. Mrs. O'Shea could not contemplate the possibility of continuing to bear her husband's name, after that husband had dragged her into the public court and overwhelmed her reputation with charges which nothing could ever efface. As a Protestant she considered that marriage was terminable for serious reasons. 'Do you want me to be that man's wife till death?' was her question to Parnell, which left him no alternative but to bow to her decision. Personally I am convinced that he could easily have shown that the disguises under which he was seen in the neighbourhood of O'Shea's house had been habitual to him for years, in order to avoid unpleasant or dangerous notoriety in England. The other allegations were at least open to different explanation.

To all appearances, the universal sentiments of the Irish race, while deeply pained at the private misfortune and shame, agreed in regarding the case and the verdict as entirely outside the sphere of political considerations. Three days after the issue of the trial there was a meeting of the National League in Dublin. A resolution to maintain the political leadership of Parnell was carried with unanimity. Mr. Swift MacNeill, M.P., expressed to Mr. Parnell 'unswerving affection and allegiance from the depths of my heart.' Mr. Donal Sullivan, M.P., pledged himself, 'come weal or woe,' to the same effect. There was a dollar-collecting mission in America at that time, consisting of Mr. T. P. O'Connor, M.P., Mr. William O'Brien, M.P., Mr. John Dillon, M.P., and a couple of others. On the news of the divorce verdict reaching America, all three declared themselves on the side of 'unflinching allegiance to the party

chief.' Mr. T. P. O'Connor patriotically declared that 'it was for the Irish alone' to choose their leader. Mr. William O'Brien pledged himself 'to stand firmly by Parnell.' Mr. Dillon 'saw nothing in what had occurred' to alter the leadership of the Irish party. The Irish party press maintained the same position. The divorce was a regrettable affair of private life, but the leadership was a question of politics. Five days after the divorce verdict, a public meeting of great dimensions filled the Leinster Hall at Dublin. Mr. Justin McCarthy, the vice-chairman of the party, proposed the resolution of 'unabated confidence in Mr. Parnell, and approval of the determination of the Irish party to stand by their leader.' In supporting the resolution, Mr. T. M. Healy, M.P., declared that Mr. Parnell was to them 'not a man but an institution.' ('Hear, hear.') Mr. Healy added, amid rapturous enthusiasm, that 'it would be both foolish and criminal to surrender the great chief who had led them so far.' The meeting was moved to further enthusiasm by the receipt of a cablegram from America, signed by Dillon, O'Brien, and T. P. O'Connor, 'standing firmly by the leadership of Parnell, and convinced that his imperishable services and matchless statesmanship are essential to the safety of the national cause.' Even great and eminent English Liberals like Mr. Jacob Bright and Mr. Illingworth spoke from Manchester and Bradford to declare that it was 'the duty of Mr. Parnell to remain at his political post,' notwithstanding the private misfortune which had clouded his name. On Tuesday, November 25, eight days after the verdict, when there had been complete time to ascertain the judgment of the Irish nation, the Irish party in Parliament by a unanimous vote re-elected Mr. Parnell as the party chairman for the session. No doubt men would continue to blame and to lament the slur on the private life of the famous leader, but, as was observed by The MacDermott, Q.C., at the Dublin meeting, 'the soldiers and sailors of Wellington and Nelson could not inquire into the private morality of their great commanders on the eve of Trafalgar or Waterloo.' The regrettable incident



was practically closed, and the session promised to be full of political interest and good promise for Ireland.

Ireland was calculating without Mr. Gladstone. Mr. Gladstone was now a very old man of eighty-one, within three years of his final disappearance from politics. He was devoted to religious exercises and meditation beyond the point of Puritanism. He was an old Parliament hand, as he had boasted. There had never been any love lost between him and Parnell. He had furiously resented Parnell's interference with his Land Act. He had broken Parnell's health in prison, by the exercise of an enactment which had deprived Ireland of all the guarantees of the Constitution. Parnell and he, for different reasons, had agreed to work together 'for the advancement of Liberal principles in Ireland'; but there could be no cordiality between the elder man, who had so much besides Ireland to think about, and the younger man, whose attitude must always be that every interest was a matter of indifference outside Ireland. Even in the course of the preparation and discussion of the first of Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule Bills, divergence had been wide between the two men. Parnell had declared for Grattan's Parliament as a minimum of Ireland's requirements. Mr. Gladstone wanted, above all, to remove the Irish from the Imperial Parliament, to tax them for Imperial purposes, and to give them a sort of legislative assembly on the model of the inferior Crown Colonies. Mr. Parnell had bitterly objected to the financial fleecing of Ireland under Mr. Gladstone's Bill. In Lord Morley's 'Life of Gladstone' we have vivid glimpses of the duel between the pair: 'Parnell, extraordinarily close, tenacious and sharp. It was all finance.' 'Parnell went on repeating his points in his impenetrable way.' Mr. Gladstone himself noted 'that he had spent an hour and a half with Morley and Parnell on the root of the matter. A hard day.' In the words of Lord Morley, 'it was not at all improbable that the Bill would have been rejected at the eleventh hour in Committee by the Irish on this department of it; and then all would have been at an end.' 'On the

evening when the Bill was produced Mr. Parnell made certain complaints.' When Mr. Gladstone was driven by the increasing difficulties round his unworkable measure to propose that it should only be pressed to a second reading and then dropped for the session, Mr. Parnell had 'completely threatened that under such circumstances he might not be a party to the second reading at all.' As Lord Morley notes: 'Mr. Gladstone and Parnell had a conversation in my room. Parnell courteous enough, but depressed and gloomy; Mr. Gladstone worn and fagged.'

These quotations are sufficient indication that the Kilmainham treaty notwithstanding, Gladstone could count on no blind allegiance from the haughty Irishman. Certainly it was not Mr. Justin McCarthy, nor Mr. T. P. O'Connor, nor Mr. John Dillon, who would ever stand up to the great Premier of Liberalism with this dogged and independent opposition.

Mr. Gladstone, from the very first moment, came to the conclusion, already rejected and scouted by Ireland, that Mr. Parnell's private misfortune necessitated retirement from his public position. It is almost amusing to read in Lord Morley's 'Life' the accumulating indications of Mr. Gladstone's righteous resolution that Mr. Parnell must go out of politics. Mr. Gladstone was ready to welcome Vaticanism, and all its works, and all its interventions in civil government, if only the Pope would annihilate Parnell. On November 16, 1890, before the verdict had even been arrived at, we find Mr. Gladstone writing to Lord Morley upon Parnell, and already asking, 'Will he ask for the Chiltern Hundreds? He cannot continue to lead. *The Pope has now clearly got a commandment under which to pull him up.*' Yes, the Pope was going to interfere in the civil government of Ireland; but Mr. Gladstone had to show his own hand first. The day after the verdict we find Mr. Gladstone writing to Lord Morley to express his pained astonishment at the continued silence of the Irish Catholic bishops and clergy. 'I own to some surprise at the apparent facility with which the Roman Catholic bishops

and clergy appear to take the continued leadership.' But anxious though Mr. Gladstone declared himself to be for the interference of the Pope and councils, cardinals, archbishops, and bishops, for the destruction of Parnell, he was resolved, in case the Church should fail to do its obvious and elementary duty, then the Irish Parliamentary party was to be the tribunal of excommunication. Sadly but resolutely, Mr. Gladstone confided to Lord Morley that '*it is the Irish Parliamentary party and that alone to which we have to look.*' As I have repeatedly reminded the reader, the Irish Parliamentary party was already profoundly Gladstonised; and the old parliamentary hand was probably aware of the fact. He had several possible informants in the councils of that party.

There is an aspect of Mr. Gladstone's remorseless attack on Mrs. O'Shea, or Mrs. Parnell as she was soon to be, which has altogether escaped general notice, but which—even as a parenthesis—ought by no means to be overlooked. I refer to the fact that Mrs. O'Shea, herself niece of Lord Chancellor Hatherley in Gladstone's great Ministry of 1868–1874, had for a number of years, and in the most important moments, been the intermediary and plenipotentiary between the Gladstone Ministry and Mr. Parnell, and that the most important and delicate negotiations passed through her fine and tactful hands. In Mr. Barry O'Brien's '*Life of Parnell*,' published in the lifetime of the English statesmen concerned, there is the following record of conversations with Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Gladstone:—

'By the way, there is another point, Mr. Chamberlain, that I had forgotten, which I should like to put to you. Going away from the question of Canada, I find that in 1885 Parnell was in touch with Lord Carvernon through Mr. Justin McCarthy, or directly. He was in touch with you through Captain O'Shea. Was he in communication with Mr. Gladstone at this time, directly or indirectly?'

*Mr. Chamberlain*: 'Yes. He was in communication with Mr. Gladstone through a lady.'

'Mrs. O'Shea?'

*Mr. Chamberlain*: 'Yes.'



'Mr. Gladstone has frankly told me that. He told me that he had seen Mrs. O'Shea for the first time in 1882.'

*Mr. Chamberlain* : 'Yes, he told me the same thing.'

'May I take it that the Cabinet was practically in relation with Parnell through Mrs. O'Shea from 1882?'

*Mr. Chamberlain* : 'Yes.'

The admissions of Mr. Gladstone are equally instructive, though full of the reservations of the old parliamentary hand. Though showering his postcards through the land, Mr. Gladstone allowed none of his handwriting to bear witness to these negotiations.

'I had a communication from Mrs. O'Shea about the same time. She wrote to ask me to call to see her. Well, she told me that she was a niece of Lord Hatherley, and I called to see her. She said that a great change had come over Parnell with reference to the Liberal party, and that he desired friendly relations with us. I said that I had no objection to friendly relations with him, and wished to meet him in a fair spirit.'

'Had you any written communications with Mrs. O'Shea?'

*Mr. Gladstone* : 'No, I wrote her no letters of importance. I wrote her letters acknowledging hers, as I have told you in the case of the first appointment. But all my communications with her were oral, and all my communications with Parnell were oral.'

During the years of 'communications' not limited to 'the first appointment,' during the period—ever since 1882—of 'practical relations between the Cabinet and Mr. Parnell through Mrs. O'Shea,' it never once occurred to Mr. Gladstone that any deep affection united this gifted and beautiful woman with the Irish leader! Mr. Chamberlain is a witness that 'in 1885'—the immensely important period of the negotiations of the first Gladstonian Bill on Home Rule—'Mr. Gladstone was in communication with Mr. Parnell through a lady,' that 'the Cabinet was practically in relations with Mr. Parnell through Mrs. O'Shea.' Ill was it, indeed, for Parnell and Mrs. O'Shea that they ever entered into negotiations with Mr. Gladstone; especially ill, perhaps, when Mrs. O'Shea assured Gladstone 'that a great change had come over Parnell with reference to the Liberal party.'

There was less corresponding change than the sanguine envoy of peace imagined in the Liberal Premier with reference to Mr. Parnell ; and in the dark hour of mortal distress and misery, we now have learned how Mr. Gladstone was to act both towards his Parnellite ambassadress and the trusting Irishman who had put his fate in the white hands which Mr. Gladstone knew for years were the white hands of Parnell's beloved.<sup>1</sup>

In Lord Morley's 'Life' it is clearly admitted that the righteous Puritan of Hawarden was fully aware of the decision of the Irish nation and was prepared to disregard it. 'The politicians in Dublin did not hesitate. Not a whisper of revolt was heard. The chief Nationalist newspaper stood firm for Mr. Parnell's continuance. At least one ecclesiastic of commanding influence was supposed to be among the journal's most ardent prompters.' Horrified at the perfect unanimity of Ireland, Mr. Gladstone turned for hope to the annual meeting of the central Liberal organisation which was at hand at Sheffield. Mr. Gladstone had great faith that the Nonconformists might yet raise a ruction. As he wrote to Lord Morley : 'It is yet to be seen what our Nonconformist friends will say.' He had even hopes that Mr. Parnell might be hissed by some of the Holier Willies within the House itself. 'I should not be surprised,' wrote Mr. Gladstone, 'if there were to be rather

<sup>1</sup> I heard, indeed, that the discovery by Captain O'Shea of Gladstone's long and surreptitious negotiations and confidences with Mrs. O'Shea played a large part in the formation of O'Shea's conviction of the guilt of his wife and Parnell. Captain O'Shea believed for years that he was the sole intermediary between Government and prisoner in the Kilmainham treaty. Only subsequent to the Galway scandal he learned that his wife had been the special plenipotentiary, and it was the story of those confidential visits of the Premier in person to the hotel in Berkeley Square, in order to consult with Mrs. O'Shea, who met him there in equal secrecy, that finally convinced O'Shea that his wife had gone further than an innocent friend was entitled to go. 'She never told me. Nor did Gladstone. Nor did Parnell.' And Captain O'Shea applied strong language to Mr. Gladstone for conducting such a transaction behind a husband's back. He bitterly hoped that Gladstone's parliamentary majority would suffer like Parnell's uncrowned kingship by the event of the Divorce Court. It is said that none but the police guarding his person were ever aware of Mr. Gladstone's visits to Mrs. O'Shea at Berkeley Square. Both Parnell and Mrs. O'Shea had soon distrusted Gladstone. They thought that he took all and gave little.

a painful manifestation in the House on Tuesday.' With difficulty restraining his impatience, Mr. Gladstone actually waited a couple of days more before writing to Mr. Arnold Morley on November 23 that his correspondents in England had encouraged him to do 'his duty,' and that 'the time for action has now come.' Mr. Gladstone's notion of the becoming action towards Ireland in the emergency which he was bent on creating, was to try and frighten the Parliamentary party from electing Parnell as chairman by secretly threatening them that he, Gladstone, would smash the Home Rule movement in Great Britain if they did not depose their leader. Not bad for the perpetual patron of all the nationalities from the Danube to Palermo! Fortunately he had not made so much pother about the marriage-lines of his Garibaldians and Komitadjis.

The prestige of Mr. Gladstone's name is so immense; the talent, the ascendancy, the scholarship of the greatest Parliamentarian are so superb and dominating; that it must savour of some impiety and more impertinence for a mere Irishman to question Mr. Gladstone's attitude towards Ireland. Still I must, were it only as a pupil of 'that vigorous thinker and sincere lover of truth if ever there was one,' Professor J. E. Cairnes—as Lord Morley says of him—submit Mr. Gladstone's attitude towards Ireland to historical criticism, and on the ground of that criticism I must pronounce it unfair, unnecessary, permanently injurious, and unstatesmanlike in an extraordinary degree. Unquestionably it promoted a revival of Liberalism of a sort in Ireland, and it permanently weakened the very spirit of Irish nationality. These results may be good or bad, and I am convinced that they are bad even in England's interest. The unfairness of the manœuvres to set the Irish members against their leader and against their own honour and consistency is enhanced by the fact, that in the actual circumstances it was easy, ingloriously easy, for Mr. Gladstone to defeat and ruin Parnell. Parnell's party was so sapped and mined and divided. The action of the churchmen was so vicious and overwhelming. And the haggard, hunted



figure of the betrayed chief was so tragically pitiful in his hopeless courage and defence ! The gallant quarry never had a chance. Even without sore illness the situation was above Parnell's mastery. With sore sickness and worn nerve and sinew, pulse and brain, all powers temporal and spiritual combined against one heartbroken and insulted man ; the misery that Mr. Gladstone let loose on his hapless adversary, the shame and sorrow which his influence thrust upon him and the shrinking partner of his soul ; all make up a horror, a real horror, which reflexion and meditation distinctly fail to extenuate.

In the first place, Parnell's lieutenants were no longer his lieutenants ; and that made all the difference. They had been absolutely dependent on him in the days which made the fame of the Parnellite party, such as it was. But things were changed. The starveling patriots who had been picked up out of nothing, who had been fed and clothed by the moneys of the League, were as unlike the prosperous persons who were now to discuss the retention or dismissal of their leader as the army of Italy of General Bonaparte before entering Italy from that army after it had reaped honours and profits, whole garments, uniforms, watches and trinkets, full bellies and full pockets from the occupation of Italy. But Parnell was not a Bonaparte, and hardly more than a bit of a Murat now, with his white plume draggled and his sword arm lame. The fashion in much of English political criticism to represent the Parnellites as always a pack of tatterdemalions is responsible for much stupid reasoning. Even when they were all-but-tatterdemalions, they had keen brains and ready tongues ; and they soon got the rest. From advocating the cause of the tenants at Westminster to advocating it as well-paid lawyers before the Land Courts in Ireland was a speedy alternation. The rush to the bar followed the trot through the lobbies ; but it was the Irish Bar. The first-class journalistic gifts of others developed from the inflation of the Irish News Agency to valuable occupation on the Sassenach press. Even the leader's success in receiving voluntary and

pecuniary tributes had obtained not unimportant imitation. The bank accounts of some Land League counsellors showed tens of thousands of pounds; for what was grudged in rents was hardly grudged in fees.<sup>1</sup> There was no plan of campaign against the marking of patriotic briefs. One eloquent patriot had received a testimonial of £8000 and the mayoralty of Dublin for two years, worth £3000 a year. Another patriot had skipped from the platforms of the Bradlaugh Secular Convention to the directorate of Liberal publication companies, *viâ* Ireland, and in a single transaction had gained, according to the records in Somerset House, £14,500. These were commercial and business achievements which go far to shatter the silly legend that the Irishman is improvident and reckless. Give them their opportunity, and these Parnellite speculators were equal to the chance. I do not presume to criticise or to applaud. I register facts; and the facts had made these independent capitalists quite personages who now felt themselves perfectly free to form their judgment on leader or no leader, with the independent sense that they were not in want of the leader's doles any longer. They used to escape penury by blind obedience to Parnell. They could now throw Parnell to the wolves who ravened for his ruin, and feel complacently satisfied that they could afford themselves that and other luxuries. If Englishmen continue obstinately to cherish the silly legend that Irish abolitionists of everything cannot entertain conservative and even acquisitive views in matters of their own property and profits, the later developments of the League lieutenants would enlighten them. At home, as beyond the Atlantic, the enthusiastic patriot can be combined with a shrewd man of business. The *Freeman's* leader writer composed a glowing denunciation of place-hunting under an alien Government

<sup>1</sup> A genial story of the Four Courts relates that when Mr. T. M. Healy, already a wealthy man, began to differ with his party, one of his most excruciating engines of torture was his assumption of a sensitive delicacy as to undue remuneration of his legal services in Land League cases. On a brief for County Wicklow marked £50—a usual fee—he observed: 'What nonsense! It's only a pleasant half-hour's ride. I'll take £3 3s. od.' It was an agonising attitude for some of his legal and patriotic brethren.

to-day, and accepted the county-court judgeship of Thonamuck at £1200 a year not many hours afterwards. When Lord Morley and other eminent writers extol the 'discipline' kept by Parnell in his prime, they are naturally embarrassed to account for the mutiny of concluding days. They should realise that there is a good deal of human nature in the most highflown of Hibernian mercenaries.

While Ireland, desperately clinging to unity—that elusive phantom of Irish effort—made light of a spot on the sun of its long idolatry, Mr. Gladstone, theoretically ambuscaded behind the Nonconformist conscience, was aiming an explosive bullet into the least protected flank of the Parnellite party, soon to be known, for the most part, as the Gladstonian Home Rulers, anti-Parnellites, or McCarthyites. Mr. Gladstone sent for the most single-minded of the Gladstonians in the Irish party, Mr. Justin McCarthy, a Liberal to the backbone, whom his lifelong friend, Lady St. Helier, said 'was totally unfit to be member of the Home Rule party'—an English writer of considerable ability as a novelist and populariser of English history, formerly editor of the *Morning Star*, meek and mild, and affable in all companies, a literary Liberal of literary Liberals. Principally from his connexion through his wife with the then leader of the Home Rule party, Mr. Shaw, he had been brought into Parliament. Parnell was charmed by his gentleness and popular reputation, and made him vice-chairman on his own accession to power. He lent his name to several of Parnell's least tranquillising ventures, such as the co-directorship of the *United Irishman*; but, of course, if Mr. Justin McCarthy had been discovered with Guy Fawkes's mask and lantern, nobody would have thought the worse of him. The Gladstonian Home Rulers were soon to name him their leader! Mr. Gladstone sent for this amiable gentleman, and told him that if the wicked chief of the Parnellites did not retire, Mr. Gladstone could have nothing more to do with Home Rule and would decline the premiership. He added most carefully and considerately, as Lord Morley notes, that he would on no account put any pressure



on the Irish party—who were entirely free to come to any conclusion—but, if they did not hunt Parnell, then he, Gladstone, would dish Home Rule, or words to that effect. Poor Mr. Justin McCarthy almost sank into the earth at the dispiriting prospect of an Ireland without a Gladstone. Mr. Justin McCarthy only saw Mr. Parnell just before Parnell was elected unanimously chairman again; and on his mentioning the awful communication from Mr. Gladstone, was profoundly hurt by Parnell's curt remark that 'he was going to stand to his guns and would only consult Ireland.' Mr. Justin McCarthy felt this very much; and so also, but gradually, did an enlarging number of the Gladstonised Parnellites who had voted unanimously for a political adherence to a political leader. 'Ireland without Gladstone!' Appalling thought.

As soon as the dollar-collecting delegates in America heard that Gladstone wanted the retirement of Parnell, they felt, like Mr. Justin McCarthy, that an Ireland without a Gladstone was simply unthinkable. Never in the palmiest ages of the past had Ireland suffered such a privation. Gladstone had led on the reserves of Brian at Clontarf. Gladstone had advised Art McMorrough to baffle the Lord-Deputy. The slogan of Gladstone had resounded with O'Neil and O'Donnel at the Yellow Ford. Had Sarsfield listened to Gladstone at Limerick, it is the Dutch army which would have capitulated. With tears in their telegrams, Messrs. T. P. O'Connor, William O'Brien, and John Dillon—the three who did *not* keep the bridge—wired home that 'Mr. Gladstone must be obeyed.' Yet the devil was in it, that a couple of years later, after Parnell had been hunted to his grave, the omnipotent Gladstone was not able to pass his second Gladstonian Home Rule Bill after all! Parnell might just as well have been left to live a little longer.

There followed a hideous and dishonourable time. At first it was not devoid of comic elements, the clowning which accompanied the tragedy, as in a Shakesperian play. All lobbies and corridors at Westminster were filled with Gladstonised Parnellites declaring with stifled sobs that

‘they would never have put Parnell again in the chair if they thought it would make Mr. Gladstone retire.’ They were lachrymose. They were in wrath and despair. Their altercation was more loud than the voice of lamentation in Ramah. Their grief approached what it would have been in earlier stages of their fortune, if Pat Ford had docked their wages. I was on the Continent at the crisis, having ‘cut the lot’ since three or four years. The Continent was immensely interested. From Vienna to Paris, and further, the ladies were Parnellite; and with woman’s common sense wanted to know what the flirtations of a statesman had to do with the Board of Works, or the Budget, or even the Railways. Everybody was hugely amused at Mr. Gladstone’s morality. People had wondered at his taking ‘le parti des dynamiteurs’ to his arms; and now they noted gleefully that he was far more severe towards ‘l’adultère’ than ‘l’assassinat.’ When the Irish bishops came out with their belated endorsement of *Gladstonius de Matrimonio*, it was the turn of the Catholic clergy in half a dozen Catholic States to shake and roll with laughter. The Continental clergy are Conservative or semi-Conservative to a man. The complicity of notorious Irish ecclesiastics in the propagandism of the Land League had brought the Irish churchmen into evil odour with all the wearers of violet and cardinal red from Westphalia to the toe of Italy. But when the bishops who had never boggled at the plan of campaign now made such a holy fuss about an *amourette* that to them was at least a half-dozen years old, and when the absurdity was done to help Sir Gladstone, who always protested above all things against the priest in politics, the hilarity around episcopal tables threatened to become uproarious. ‘Voilà le Vaticanisme for ever!’ When, in addition, it was announced in all the French, and German, and Italian newspapers, that the two lost souls of the new Paolo and Francesca were stout Protestant, for whose spiritual condition the most reverends of Maynooth had no responsibility whatever, neither on earth nor in heaven, nor under the earth, the joke bordered on bad

theology. Some priests of the Irish colleges tried to explain that the Maynooth hierarchy were concerned to preserve the spotless purity of Ireland from the contamination of bad example, and the last remnants of ecclesiastical gravity collapsed ! The spotless purity of Ireland appeared to be a fragile investment according to this explanation.

Unhappily it was no laughing matter among ignorant and ductile classes or masses in Ireland. I remembered the Reform Act of 1884 and the 500,000 peasant voters who had swamped the constituencies. That crude multitude had followed the churchmen and the Leaguers to elect Parnell's candidates a couple of years ago ; being practically told also that Gladstone had promised Parnell to divide the rest of the Irish estates among the virtuous tenantry. When now the churchmen and the great Gladstone told them together that ' Parnell had betrayed Ireland for an Englishwoman,' how would all these incompetents behave ? I felt certain that some strategy was necessary. My just resentment at a hundred things ill done by my old comrade yielded to the gravity of his present misfortune, which threatened public calamity to all Ireland. And he had been such a bonny fighter ! I believed that I could save him, if he would be saved. I had a most delightful acquaintance, speaking English well. He is now in a distinguished position in the Foreign Ministry of a great country. I shall send him this book, which will remind him of an adventure that impressed him perhaps most of all in his life full of action and variety. He was keenly interested in the drama of the Irish leader and the British statesman. He had talked of paying a visit to Ireland. I said to him that I wished to give advice to Parnell, and that I could not trust the post, and would not be able, for many reasons, to go in person. Would he find Parnell, tell him that his old friend O'Donnell was sorry for his troubles, and asked him to read what he had sent ? ' Get Parnell to read it in your presence. People can think that you are the correspondent of a foreign journal.' My friend was enchanted with the adventure. I gave him the following plan of campaign which I wanted



Parnell to follow. It is exactly copied from the original notes. I pray the reader to study it, for it will throw a light on Parnell's position and on the weaknesses of it; which has not ceased to be useful. The squalid treachery of Committee-room 15 was drawing to a close as my friend departed.

#### COPY OF MY PLAN FOR PARNELL.

December 1890.

I do not think that up to the present your action in connexion with the crisis has been quite fair or wise, as regards yourself, as regards your party, as regards the country at large.

In the first place you have not explained, as you ought to explain if you can, that the circumstances of disguise and mystery under which you visited the O'Sheas were just the same circumstances of disguise and mystery under which you were accustomed to go about through England, in order to avoid notoriety and disagreeable consequences among strangers who liked neither you nor your country.

Secondly, you have not explained, as you ought to explain if you can, that Captain O'Shea's charge, though false, having made it absolutely impossible for his wife to return to him, you deliberately chose the only way of obtaining her liberty by declining to defend the case.

Thirdly, you have not explained, as you ought to explain if you can, that, though your conduct towards Mrs. O'Shea has been always blameless, you do not deny a warm affection in her regard which, now that she is free, will undoubtedly lead to marriage; both of you being members of a Church in which marriage under the circumstances is lawful.

*I venture to say that upon all these points a clear and straight explanation by you to the country would have the greatest possible weight.*

With regard to the question of the leadership, I am entirely with you in considering that, after the election to the chairmanship by the party, and especially after the intervention of the English Premier, it is impossible to consider the question of your resignation as if that English intervention had not occurred. On the other hand, there is the fact of a most serious division of opinion in the Parliamentary party and in the country at large, especially represented by the action of the Catholic bishops.

The view that I suggest—a view which is consonant with the dignity of Irish independence and which removes all excuse of opposition by the hostile members of the party—which would both secure your position and give time for future developments—the course which I recommend is this: *Simply announce to the party that you must altogether decline the right of any opinion except Irish opinion to interfere in the question.* That, therefore, you decline to resign that chairmanship which is now more than ever the badge of the independence of the party; but that to give time for the formation of calmer judgment and out of respect for the opinions of honest and honourable critics, and also for the purpose of consulting the opinion of the Irish race at large, *that you will leave for some months at least the direction of the party in the hands of the regularly voted vice-chairman*, while you proceed to America to consult the masses of our exiled countrymen upon the attitude which Ireland ought to maintain in the presence of the claims of English parties.

In this manner I am convinced that you will bring with you from the ranks of your present opponents such a mass of acquiescence and support, that, added to the support which has never deserted you, you will be able to present yourself to the Irish in America under circumstances which would ensure the permanent independence of Irish politics from all outside intervention.

PS.—I ought to add that it would look well, if you are able to do it, if you introduced into your explanatory manifesto a clear statement that, though you bitterly resent the manner in which Captain O'Shea has allowed himself to be inflamed by interested advisers and false testimony, and though his error made reconciliation impossible, *nevertheless you are bound to bear your testimony to the high and honourable character of all Captain O'Shea's relations with you*, and to the generous, confidential, and affectionate hospitality and care which you had always received from him, especially in seasons of serious and depressing illness and exhaustion. I think that this explanation, if you can make it, would also add immensely to the general effect of the manifesto which I suggest. It would certainly be received with the greatest pleasure by your friends in America.

There are one or two further notes which I have lost. One in particular related, I remember, to the speakers whom I wished to see accompanying Parnell in his visit to America. I recommended in particular that Mr. Edmund Leamy,

the talented and upright member for Waterford, should on no account be left behind. I had always regarded Leamy as one of the most eloquent and persuasive young orators whom I had heard in London during twenty years. He had a fine voice, a cultured diction, very different from the violent harangues of more conspicuous colleagues, an absolutely unselfish devotion to his country, and a winning manner in social intercourse which gained him friends on every side. Since his election to Parliament ten years before, he had never found the opportunity for the distinction which was his due. The Old Gang whom I have called the 'lieutenants' practically monopolised every occasion of important speech; and as all of them had been long settled in Dublin, the clannishness of Dublin Nationalism secured them a publicity often quite out of proportion to their merits. With Leamy and Colonel Nolan to accompany him, I felt assured, as I feel assured to-day, that if Parnell had followed my advice, he would have weathered triumphantly the storm which had been let loose against him. The same elements were hostile to him in America which were aiding Mr. Gladstone in Ireland; but all my reports had satisfied me that the masses of Irish Americans resented, with the utmost indignation, the pretension of an English Premier to dictate the selection of an Irish leader. When Mr. Harrington, M.P., was leaving his hotel in New York to return to the scene of conflict at home, he found all the stairways and doorways crowded with the Irish servants of the hotel, both male and female, together with Irish friends and acquaintances from outside, all entreating him, many with sobs: 'Sure, you will never abandon him, Mr. Harrington. Sure, you won't betray Parnell to the English, Mr. Harrington.' That spirit I was satisfied was practically universal in Irish America. The National Fenians—usually the most honest men in Ireland—had become the chief supporters of Parnell at home. In America the National Fenians were far more powerful than in Ireland, and I had no doubt of their will as well as their force, if



only Parnell appealed to them before it was too late. By his simply leaving the direction of the Parliamentary party as it was, he would avoid pushing his Gladstonised followers to the necessity of openly preferring the English Premier, while he would reserve the whole future for his return. Had he landed in New York according to my counsels he would have been borne in triumph through every state in the Union, and within six months he would have been master of such immense resources of enthusiasm and wealth, that opposition would have been far more helpless and hopeless than at any former period of his career.

Meantime Mr. Gladstone's campaign against him had been pushed with sly and relentless persistence ; first there was the confidential communication to Mr. Justin McCarthy, then there was the detailed letter to Mr. Morley, insisting at length on the impossibility of continuing the Home Rule agitation in England so long as Mr. Parnell remained at the head of the Irish party. Mr. Gladstone himself, in a memorandum published in Lord Morley's ' Life,' confesses that this letter was to be not only the second but the final stage in the ripening of his breach with the Irish leader. It was intended to be, says Mr. Gladstone, ' a stronger measure than that taken through Mr. McCarthy because it was more full, *and because, as it was in writing, it admitted of the ulterior step of immediate publication.*' If it had been Mr. Gladstone's deliberate object to inflict such a public insult on Mr. Parnell as to render open war an inevitable consequence, I do not see how he could have proceeded with less regard to public and private sentiments. Mr. Gladstone, indeed, did not even wait to have his dictatorial injunctions published in the morning's paper. As he himself admits : ' During the evening it became known in the lobbies of the House.' When we remember that *more than two years was still to elapse before a general election*, that every friend of peace must have recommended that time should be given for mutual reflexion on the situation, there can hardly be any second opinion about the amount of conciliation which

was in Mr. Gladstone's mind when he resolved upon this course of brusque and brutal dictatorialism and intimidation. Mr. Gladstone's only excuse, as quoted by Lord Morley, was that he had been 'endeavouring since 1885 to reason with the voters of this kingdom on the Home Rule question, and when the voter now tells me that he cannot give a vote for making the Mr. Parnell of to-day the ruler of Irish affairs under British sanction, I do not know how to answer him.' But the voter had told Mr. Gladstone nothing whatever of the sort. The voter had not had time to tell anything to anybody. Mr. Gladstone had not consulted, and had received no answers from, the voter. His pocket indeed might be full, as it was full, of virtuous appeals and menaces from some of the numerous Chadbands and Stigginases in the kingdom ; but the fact remains that without any mandate from England, and in the face of the deliberate declarations of Ireland, Mr. Gladstone resolved on breaking up the Irish representation and breaking up the peace of the Irish nation for the deliberate purpose of carrying out his own will against the Irish leader, and against the unhappy lady who had been his own most useful counsellor and agent for eight years.

Lord Morley relates that Mr. Gladstone was in such a hurry to precipitate hostilities that when he found that the *Pall Mall Gazette*, then edited by the then Mr. John Morley, had ceased its normal publication for the evening, he cried out : ' It is not too late, the *Pall Mall* can bring it out in a special edition ' ! Mr. Gladstone would not even wait for the Irish Parliamentary party to talk over the matter before *publishing to the world* that he had demanded the retirement of Mr. Parnell. Did Mr. Gladstone always believe that there was no sense of pride or national dignity in any section of the Irish nation ?

It will be really unfair to Mr. Gladstone's memory, if I were to omit some reference to his appeals for the exercise of clerical pressure. The civil statesman, who had resented so loudly and so long every interference of the Church of

Rome in the civil affairs of the kingdom, was now in the closest confabulation with all the prelates of the Church of Rome who could be used against Mr. Parnell. My old and illustrious friend, Cardinal Manning, always an ascetic of the saintliest type, had of course been shocked by the official evidence of conjugal infidelity on the part of a member of the Imperial legislature. Lord Morley is able to record how close and earnest were the efforts and the conferences of the ancient protagonists in offence and defence of Vaticanism in England :—

Cardinal Manning had more than once written most urgently to the Irish prelates that Parnell could not be upheld in London, and that no political expediency could outweigh the moral sense. It was now a case, he said to Mr. Gladstone, of *res ad triarios*, and it was time for the Irish clergy to speak out from the housetops. He had also written to Rome. *Did I not tell you*, said Mr. Gladstone, *that the Pope would now have one of the ten commandments on his side ?*

So there we have the veteran champion of nationalities threatening the Home Rule party with desertion, flinging his provocations into publicity, planning and intriguing with every prelate from the Liffey to the Tiber in order to lead them to interfere in national politics, and to induce them to beat down, by an illegitimate use of their spiritual weapons, a country which could be brought by no other argument to abandon the independence of its representatives and the independence of its leader. There are few less attractive incidents in modern history.

I am not writing this history from any standpoint but strict justice to all sides, as I understand the facts by the aid of an intimate knowledge of every side of the story such as was possessed by no other witness of the events. I leave sentiment to the public. I have not been sentimental towards Irishmen. I must be as just, according to the actual facts, to Gladstone as to Mr. Patrick Ford. The one was a great and cultured Englishman. The other was an



ignorant half-savage of Irish extraction. That does not affect the narration of facts. Later in these chapters I shall acknowledge still more clearly that Mr. Gladstone secured the absolute triumph of what called itself Liberalism as well as Nationalism in Ireland down to the present day. I shall acknowledge that Mr. Gladstone's merciless tactics produced momentous results for England and the Empire as well as for Ireland. I shall acknowledge at once, as poor Parnell acknowledged, that the Irish idol was no match for the skilled iconoclast who shattered him. Parnell had been merciless in his day of power, or what appeared to most to be power. He was now to be hunted and reviled more ruthlessly than he had hunted and abandoned to the reviler his own leaders in the Home Rule party, his own colleagues, all the gallant gentlemen who represented the union of classes in a national movement which could not be national and be hostile to any class of Irishmen. He had come to his St. Helena of shame and sorrow, the gallant fighter, the unskilful autocrat, the haughty gentleman who stood by a woman against earth and hell and the pretended interpreters of heaven, both clerical and lay, rigidly righteous ex-premiers and political prelates of Rome.

In 'Memories of Fifty Years,' by Lady St. Helier, a book of admirable poise and judgment, some of the most thoughtful pages are devoted to a notice of some of Mr. Gladstone's characteristics, from which his vindictiveness is not excluded. It is perhaps incidental to the combative nature to be inclined to vindictiveness. I always considered Mr. Gladstone both vindictive and ungenerous whenever he was impelled by righteousness. It might be said that he had a spice of the Cromwellian temper. There will always be apologists for the earnest reformer who slays and spares not. The kindred of the Irishwomen who were put to the sword after Worcester fight did not admire this earnest spirit. Mr. Gladstone always intended to be just. He could not even pay the parliamentary

tribute to dead Disraeli without 'much searching of heart beforehand.' But there is another circumstance which affected Mr. Gladstone's mind to an extraordinary degree, and when I mention it my statement will be received with incredulous amusement. But it is absolutely true. Mr. Gladstone was always a recluse, and this fact gave him an inexperience, a dogmatism, and a self-worshipping tendency which belong to strong natures condemned to the contemplation of their own inclinations. He was always a recluse. He was always surrounded by a hedge or wall of admiring, compliant counsellors, friends, relatives, intimates of a recluse and unbending species for the most part themselves. Said Lord Randolph often, 'You know they pack Gladstone in cotton-wool every morning, and he sometimes goes to bed in it.' I had said the same thing to Lord Randolph in other words, not less vigorous of metaphor. When, in addition, the frost of extreme age, in spite of his abiding vigour, was added to these hindrances of generous perception, then we had mercilessness indeed. Lord Morley, quite unconsciously perhaps, gives a characterisation of Mr. Gladstone which exhibits the whole defectiveness of the man and the statesman.

I am always feeling how strong is his aversion to seeing more than he can help of what is sordid, mean, ignoble. He has not been in public life all these years without rubbing shoulders with plenty of baseness on every scale, and plenty of pettiness in every hue, *but he has always kept his eyes well above it.*

Lord Morley adds a number of admiring sentiments. He has limned our Gladstone for us. Gladstone usually kept his eyes above what he did not wish to see. Parnell playing the Goths and Vandals with the Land Act had not a redeeming feature. So long as the wise and witty Mrs. O'Shea was 'the bridge of alliance' between Gladstone and Parnell, it positively never occurred to the self-righteous Premier that lovely women do not usually devote the keenest attention of their souls to the interests of perfect strangers

to their affections. 'He always kept his eyes well above' that common fact of human nature. Then all of a sudden, after years of those feminine negotiations, Mr. Gladstone discovered, read in the newspapers, in fact, that Mrs. O'Shea cared for Parnell! The excellent man could not credit the new, the horrible possibility. 'There is a thunder-clap about Parnell,' he gasped. 'Will he take the Chiltern Hundreds?' Gladstone considered himself in the year 1889 quite equal to replacing Parnell at the head of the Irish vote; and he did. With the help of the Vatican—which got its own share.

One of the most perfectly lovely illustrations of the efforts of all the confederates to live up to the tactics of maintaining the perfect ignorance of everybody that there was a Mrs. O'Shea in Parnell's life, is contained in a 'Life of Parnell' by Mr. T. P. O'Connor, M.P., so well known in the London press for his prowess in picturesque description.

Here is a fantasia, worthy of the agony column, on the innocent Irish party and the dark and designing Parnell:—

What *frenzied* consultation—what *agonised* conjectures—what despairful proposals this time brought forth! At last the report came forth that Mr. Parnell had gone to Paris, and some of his colleagues went over there to see him. Mr. Patrick Egan, the treasurer of the Land League, was a resident in that city at the time, and thus a council of the Land League could be held there: but in the hotel where Mr. Parnell was expected to be, there was neither trace nor announcement of him. But several letters awaited him. There were all kinds of *horrid* suspicions. It was known that some of his relatives had ended *tragically*, and there was always in those moments of crisis the *dreadful* feeling that anything might happen to Parnell. After a *solemn* consultation *it was decided to open some of the letters*, in the hope of finding some trace or clue to the *vanished* Chief. One of the letters was from a lady: it was scarcely glanced at: *but it told enough: it was the first warning* the Irish party had of the opening of the *tragedy* that finally *engulfed* Parnell and went near to *engulfing* Ireland.



Such is Mr. T. P. O'Connor, M.P.'s story of the very, very first warning to the Irish party—the innocently dreaming Irish party!—of the reason why the young ladies of the Ladies' Land League nicknamed them 'Kitty's crowd' nearly ten years before. O the horrid, horrid, dreadful, solemn, tragical, engulfed, despairful, screamingly funny, descriptive reporter! As for the bare idea of the lieutenants presuming to open Parnell's private letters, even when he had fallen from his height of uncrowned kingship, they would go hide under beds and sofas, or up the chimney, rather than think of such a thing.

Mr. Gladstone's modest demand that the Irish leader, just re-elected as chairman of the Parliamentary party, should be gone from politics, under pain of seeing Home Rule deserted by the right hon. gentleman, was received by Parnell with calm indifference, but was at once accepted and obeyed by two-thirds of his devoted and adoring followers. When Mr. John O'Leary, the recognised head of the National Fenians in Ireland, had seen the sort of persons who were tumbling over one another in order to become Parnell's men in Parliament a few years before, he said, with his look of quiet contempt: 'I have seen a lot of those fellows take the Fenian oath. They are now ready to take the Parliamentary oath. Parnell will soon find that they will be faithful to nothing but their interest.' In answer to Gladstone's letter, Parnell published a manifesto, which was much too long. He began by remarking that Liberalism had sapped the national sentiments of many Irish members. The statement was so painfully true that it produced a storm of angry denial. Next he denied that Gladstone ever intended Home Rule in any real sense; which was a belated discovery. Finally, he repudiated all control save Irish opinion. Mr. Justin McCarthy, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Barry, Mr. Abraham, and a crowd of others like Messrs. T. P. O'Connor, O'Brien, and Dillon in America, declared that this repudiation of Mr. Gladstone's claim required the party to depose their leader. Parnell kept up

the fight, with the double purpose of letting the facts enter into Irish knowledge, and in order to obtain a removal of the scene of debate from London to the Irish capital. He prolonged the debate far too much, only embittering some of the weaker men who wanted a middle course. Parnell was convinced, from the assurances which he was receiving from all parts of Ireland, that the Gladstonised gentlemen would be swept away by the tide of Irish indignation. Parnell would have been quite correct in this expectation if the decision had lain with the intelligent classes of the Irish electorate. He forgot that the 500,000 new voters of the last Reform Act were about as capable of a high national sentiment as of a high mathematical calculation. From the moment that their advent seemed inevitable, I had prepared to retire from Parliament altogether, feeling that nothing except (1) their disfranchisement, which was impossible, (2) their education, which was unlikely, or (3) their emigration, which was undesirable, would ever allow the formation of a veritable nation in Ireland. Parnell imagined that because they had followed in 1885, therefore it was he whom they had followed. He was now to learn whom they had followed then, and whom they would follow again.

The situation was curiously identical with the situation after the Irish Parliament in 1793 had admitted the illiterate Catholic peasantry to the electoral franchise as forty-shilling freeholders on the same footing as the Protestants, who had previously monopolised the electoral privilege. This great act of reform and emancipation by the Irish Protestant Parliament of Ireland was practically the suicide of the Parliament. The new voters followed their priests and bishops, who had been commanded by Rome, and cajoled by Pitt, to vote for the Union with Great Britain; and the party of Mr. Grattan, who had worked for the emancipation of the Catholics, now saw them marching 'like the Sacred Band,' as an enthusiastic priest wrote to a correspondent, to support the anti-Parliament candidates of

Pitt and Castlereagh. The docile masses, shepherded by their pastors, exercised their suffrage in order to destroy the native legislature which had been so exceedingly noble and so exceedingly foolish as to enfranchise them. In 1884 Mr. Parnell had hotly supported the enfranchisement of the poor ratepayer in Ireland, and now six and seven years afterwards—exactly the same interval as in 1800—Parnell was to see the masses whom he had brought within the Constitution exercising their constitutional power to drive him into oblivion or the grave. The docile Catholic ratepayers of the end of the nineteenth century were, at the command of their spiritual leaders, to carry out the orders of the English authority, exactly as the docile Catholic freeholders of the end of the preceding century had, at the command of their spiritual leaders, carried out the orders of Pitt and Castlereagh. Moral: the same leaders the same consequences.

The ambassador whom I had sent to Parnell kept me in suspense, and I became restless. Would Parnell go straight to America? He had twice gone there when I disapproved. Would he go there now, when I advised it? I felt that I knew everything but that. All the persons in the drama were familiar for years. From Gladstone to the smallest of the Gladstonised, I knew everyone; had observed them for years; seemed to divine every thought. I wrote to Archbishop's House, Westminster. There came a long reply from my venerated friend, Rev. Dr. Johnson, the Cardinal's diocesan secretary, private secretary, canonist. The reply was all Parnell, and again Parnell. 'Ireland must be liberated from the shame to a Catholic nation. Such a sin against the commandment which lay at the root of Christian civilisation must be eradicated with a firm hand.' I could read the soul of the ascetic, and the extravagant purpose of the churchman when he plunges into politics. I knew now that all the hounds of the Lord—*Domini canes*—were hot on the scent. I touched cautiously, in a cautious letter of request, for further elucidation



upon Louis XIV, whom Bossuet idolised, and who had . . . ; upon the Emperor Charles V, who was the sword of the Church against Luther, and who . . . ? The illustrious Don John of Austria had been a lovechild of that puissant and orthodox Emperor. The Church had not preached rebellion to the political order even when Madame de Montespan came to Versailles. And was not Parnell a Protestant, to be sermonised by his own Church, if you please ? Meantime came a short note from my ambassador. He had seen Parnell alone twice, for a couple of hours together. Parnell had thanked his old comrade, had said that my retirement had done harm, that I ' had been too stand off and autocratic to the men of the party, that I ought to have been more ready to give and take.' Parnell reproving stand-offishness, &c. ; here was Lucifer rebuking iniquity ! Then came the bad news. Parnell liked the advice, but it was impossible to quit Ireland now. ' He would crush the traitors.' My friend added that things looked as black as black could be, that Parnell was ' fou d'orgueil et fou de douleur,' and also that he was ' un homme bien malade.' Mad with pride and sorrow ! A man sick indeed !

My ambassador had found Parnell white-hot with rage, with just resentment at the studied insolence, at the filthy discourtesies, which had already commenced to strike at him through nameless insults to the unhappy lady who was to be his wife. Commencing in the debates in Committee-room 15, where the party debated and split, this campaign of outrage may be said to have begun with the flippant blackguardism of the retort made to a question by Mr. Parnell, asking to know, ' Am I to be the master of the party ? ' To which an arch-blackguard had replied, ' And in that case, Mr. Parnell, who will be the mistress of the party ? '—one of those cowardly atrocities which cannot be noticed except with a boot. It was already impossible to ask the tortured man to consider dispassionately any aspect of the situation. The combative instinct merely bade him

fight. For the moment he was invincibly strong in the ancient prestige, before it had been proved that the masses were alienated from him. Had he turned haughtily to America, with a fierce appeal to comradeship against the interference of England, nothing could have checked his overwhelming revenge. The truest men and purest women in Ireland resented the abominable hypocrisies which lurked behind the pretext of a shocked morality. Could English politicians accept a corresponding scrutiny ? What of some of the most conspicuous names in contemporary Westminster ? A good indication of the disdain of the best Irish circles was afforded by a reception to Parnell on his return from the scenes in Committee-room 15. Dublin Catholic ladies, headed by Mrs. Dwyer Gray—herself the daughter of the famous woman philanthropist and worker for the betterment of the female poor, Mrs. Chisholm—met the chief at the railway, and gave their silent greeting in repudiation of the manufactured agitation. But that agitation continued to be manufactured. The vilest calumnies came to exaggerate the original scandals. Every Sunday brought the publication of a pastoral letter or some other medium of episcopal intimidation. Every Sunday brought half a dozen meetings outside of parish churches, where the new zeal of the Gladstonised was fanned by the pious breath of parish clergymen, drilled to utilise such a promising opportunity for the termination of lay leadership of Irish politics. *Domini canes !*

It was in vain that advocates of national independence reminded the clergy that their action was in support of the same Mr. Gladstone who had written in *Vaticanism*, not only that ‘the real independence for states and nations depends upon the exclusion of foreign influence in their civil affairs,’ but also that ‘to secure rights has been and is the aim of the Christian civilisation, and to destroy them and to establish the resistless domineering action of a purely central power is the aim of the Roman policy.’ The venerable clergy were perfectly well aware that they were

not fighting for the ascendancy of Mr. Gladstone. Wherever Parnell went throughout Ireland, if the priests were absent, the crowds were enthusiastic in his favour. One of those scenes of popular enthusiasm may be quoted from a contemporary account by an Irish lady who has won a distinguished place in literature :—

The great gathering waited silently with expectation. There was a distant roaring like the sea. Then the cheering began, and there was the tall figure of the Irish leader making his way across the platform. No words could do justice to his reception. Everywhere there was a sea of passionate faces. The cheering broke out again and again around that silent, pale man. The people were fairly mad with excitement.

My ambassador witnessed many of these scenes. At first he took the still and silent attitude of Mr. Parnell for real calm. He was soon undeceived. Happening to be near him for several days in succession, he could not but notice that he hardly ever appeared to eat. Often the food was placed before him—not very inviting food, coarsely cooked in provincial Irish hotels—and Parnell made only a pretence of eating. The wild admiration of his followers intruded itself at all hours of the day and almost of the night. How did he keep himself alive? A medical man exclaimed to my friend, ‘That man,’ meaning Parnell, ‘is killing himself by inches. I am told that he neither eats nor sleeps.’ There could soon be no doubt that his main sustenance was brandy, which appeared to leave no trace upon his mind, so much was it required for keeping up the forces of the weary body. Bye-elections occurred, and now the influence of the clergy over the new voters was apparent. While the masses of the old citizens—very many of them supporters of the Home Rule party which Parnell himself had broken up—came to the polls to vote for his candidates in protest against dictation, the organised columns of the new electors from the villages and from the slums marched behind the banners of the Church. Practically every bye-election was carried by the priests. The poll for Parnell’s candidates



seldom exceeded one-third of the constituency ; almost exactly corresponding to the division between the old electors and the new. What interested me most, as indicating the certain end of the contest, were the concurrent reports of Parnell's ruined health. The long infirmities of the past eight years, commencing with the wasting imprisonment in Kilmainham, were now coming to a head. Even at the outset of the campaign, during the Kilkenny election, Mr. Barry O'Brien found Parnell in a state of collapse :—

In the Victoria Hotel I was struck by the silence which prevailed : all spoke in whispers, waiters stole softly in and out. Every individual seemed anxious to make no noise. It was the silence of a sick room. It was a sick room. Stretched on a number of chairs before the fire lay Parnell, sleeping. To me he looked like a dying man.

But though he looked like a dying man, and was dying, the exigencies of the campaign gave him no rest. To continue my quotation from Mr. Barry O'Brien :—

About half an hour afterwards some one came to say that Parnell wished to see me. I found him sitting in an armchair. He looked pale and exhausted, but still the old fire burned in his eyes.

Mr. Horgan, a leading supporter of Parnell in his own constituency, speaks of his appearing at Cork at this period :

I remember his visit to Cork after the fight in Committee-room 15. I saw him at the Victoria Hotel that night. He looked like a hunted hind, his hair all dishevelled, his beard unkempt ; and his eyes were wild and restless. He sat down to a chop, but he only made a pretence of it. He said 'he would not take anything except a raw egg.' We got him the raw egg and a tumbler. He broke the egg into the tumbler and swallowed it at a gulp.

Such was the wreck who had to fight the coalition of his revolted lieutenants, the Liberal party, and the most desperate exertions of the political priesthood. The bishops

published mandates against his supporters and against newspapers which supported his party. At a subsequent period, an episcopal excommunication of a Parnellite newspaper obtained official notice in connexion with the candidature of a Parnellite against the nominee of the Bishop of Meath. The Parnellite paper, the *Westmeath Examiner*, had continued to advocate the policy of independence. The Bishop issued a formal document against the paper :

condemning its reading, and pronouncing that condemnation not merely by his own authority, but by the authority of the Holy See. To read it was sin. So long as a man continued to read it he was not fit for the sacraments. He might go to confession, but even absolution was null and void. So long as he continued the reading of that paper he could not be forgiven.

Gradually the meaner minds among the ignorant voters were kindled to a pitch of fanaticism which really accepted the cause of Parnell as the cause of the devil. Wherever Parnell appeared in districts dominated by the clergy, the ingenuity of coarse insult was unlimited. Great processions surged round him, mocking and hooting and bidding him 'Look upon the flag.' The flag held up amid the cheering roughs and jeering clergymen was the tattered underskirt of a woman hanging from a pole. It was the material incorporation of a mutineer's most recent infamy on his leader : 'Will ye take for the flag of Ireland the petticoat of Kitty O'Shea ?' There were thirty former followers, supported by three thousand clergymen, who were raging against the outraged leader from one end of Ireland to the other.<sup>1</sup> Language cannot do justice to such degradation. Patriots and politicians can see few hopes of regeneration for a nation which is capable of such descents, under no matter what

<sup>1</sup> It is most deserving of note that on both occasions, in 1906 and 1910, when the whole force of Mr. Redmond's party united to exclude Mr. Healy from election to Parliament, he was saved by the open protection of the Archbishops of Armagh and Dublin. So enduring is ecclesiastical gratitude to the deserting follower, who respected nothing in his ferocious attack upon the last representative of lay supremacy in Irish politics.

guidance. Even Lord Morley, devoted to Mr. Gladstone and to Mr. Gladstone's deeds, has to admit that Parnell went down before 'an unsparing fury that savoured of the ruthless factions of the Seine.' Who had deliberately let loose that unsparing fury? Lord Morley's admirable 'Life of Gladstone' allows us to read the mind of the little great man upon what was going on in Ireland. Writing to Mr. John Morley from Hawarden on December 23, 1890, Mr. Gladstone thus records tidings of great joy. Parnell's candidate had been beaten at Kilkenny.

Since your letter arrived this morning, the Kilkenny poll has brightened the sky. It will have a great effect in Ireland. It is a great gain; and yet sad enough to think that even here one-third of the voters should be either rogues or fools. I would rather see Ireland disunited than see it Parnellite.

To the reader who might doubt that Mr. Gladstone was capable of vindictiveness, I commend this passage. The electors of Kilkenny who voted for the unity of Ireland under the broken chief were 'rogues or fools.' In his senile hate against his victim and old ally, the bitter old politician 'would rather see Ireland disunited than see it Parnellite.' The end of poor Parnell was now at hand. A cold caught at public meetings, the want of nutriment which he could eat, the constant fever from all those hideous outrages unworthy of a nation of the semi-civilised, the old weakness of the heart, ensured a fatal termination. Rheumatic fever developed; and after only four days' confinement to bed, Parnell died at Brighton on October 6, 1891, in the arms of his wife, Katherine Parnell. His remains were carried to Ireland, and on October 11 Charles Stewart Parnell was laid in his grave at Glasnevin, mourned by an innumerable concourse of Mr. Gladstone's 'rogues and fools' from all parts of Ireland. Just twenty-one years before Parnell's death Mr. Gladstone had passed the first Land Act of 1870, which inaugurated the series of his legislative measures for the promotion of population and prosperity in Ireland. During those twenty-one years



of Gladstonian legislation no less than 1,500,000 emigrants had quitted the Irish shores, and notwithstanding the natural excess of births over deaths, the population had decreased by nearly a million persons. Yet Mr. Gladstone could take the lieutenants from their allegiance to their leader by the menace of depriving Ireland of services which had had already such glowing results! I am not sure that I would have felt so much sympathy with Parnell in his fall, notwithstanding my instinctive detestation of foreign intervention in Irish affairs, if I had not known from the commencement, what is tolerably patent to all the world now, that the popular idol had been all through the very reverse of the strong and far-seeing statesman which popular legend and party calculation combined to invent. Long after his death, Lord Morley has admitted that Parnell never possessed a shred of constructive ability. I knew from the commencement that my gallant and pertinacious comrade through so many years of guerrilla fighting in the House of Commons, never could be anything but a hero of a battlefield without the slightest capacity for becoming a planner of campaigns. His courage, his distinction, his Anglo-Irish lineage, connected with some of the best patriotic traditions, had all pointed him out to the undistinguished leaders of the vast hosts of national discontent, who, without prestige themselves, all the more eagerly desired a figure-head who should possess that quality at least. Parnell's family pride and personal vanity did the rest. He was literally incapable of rejecting the tinsel crown, even on the terms of the Land League. If we consider it, it was a tremendous bribe. Unlimited wealth for political purposes, considerable wealth for private enjoyment, where there had been nothing but privation before, oceans of enthusiasm, fierce denunciation by Ireland's enemies, answering applause from the Irish Nationalists, the violence of British ministers, the submission and adulation of British ministers—surely all these formed a mass of temptation more than enough to overheat the fancy of a stronger and more unselfish man.

When once he had taken the pay of the *Irish World*, it was practically impossible for him to return to poverty and virtue. If he had protested, if he had condemned, if he had flung back those dirty dollars, it would have meant the starvation of scores and scores of followers, apparently devoted to the utmost limits of self-sacrifice, whose only possible means of subsistence depended on the harmony between their chief and the Egans, Fords, and Finnertys, on both sides of the Atlantic. I knew that with all his weakness and all his shutting fast the eyes to hideous facts, Parnell loathed his Land League surroundings. His contempt for his members of Parliament passed the limits of common courtesy, and far exceeded the limits of common prudence. The revolting pack that turned and rent him at Mr. Gladstone's whistle had many a kick and cuff to avenge. The measureless bitterness of his latest scorn for the 'sweeps' and for the 'gutter-sparrows' was a revelation to those alone who did not know some previous history. There was inherent weakness and manifest deficiency of character in all this. It largely explained, no doubt, why some of those who knew him most intimately, such as Biggar, his closest ally, and Healy, his private secretary, turned against him with a special and unsparing animus. I never doubted, and I do not doubt now, that if Parnell had remained in the Home Rule party, and had never met the infinite temptations from an unworthy quarter, he would have risen to marked distinction as an Irish patriot, and would have powerfully contributed to the consolidation of that national unity which was to be shattered in his name. I could not have stood upon his platform even against Mr. Gladstone, but I felt that I could give my most earnest counsels to Parnell's defence against dictation from the side of English politicians.

In referring to the action of the churchmen against Parnell, it would be unjust to deny that they had some reasons as Catholic churchmen for their special animosity, and for their violent revelation of that animosity as soon as

the Divorce Court on the one side, and Mr. Gladstone's action on the other, had given them their opportunity. For nearly twenty years the political influence of Maynooth had seen itself, if not thrust aside, sorely diminished by the Home Rule laity. Isaac Butt, Mr. Shaw, Parnell, were three lay chiefs of Ireland who all represented, in varying degrees, the revolt of Ireland from the ecclesiastical tutelage which was incarnate in the traditions of O'Connellism. The Home Rulers were religious, and full of respect for religion. They were reverential towards the clergy. Home Rule was a thoroughly lay movement, embracing Protestant and Catholic patriots alike, and the most honoured of priests and bishops appeared upon its platforms, not as masters but as citizens. In addition to the discontent of the Irish clergy at this position was added, first the suspicion and then the conviction that Parnell was profoundly hostile to Catholicism. Parnell possessed no learning, but his family and class traditions had made him unfavourable to the Catholic creed, his American blood had intensified this tendency, and his patriotic sentiments, early awake to the frequent alliances between Maynooth and Whitehall, had confirmed and aggravated his dislikes. There must have been many among his intimates or followers who were aware of this disposition. His leading biographer, who was also his friend, repeatedly acknowledges the fact. I remember how on one occasion when I had been lecturing in Manchester town-hall for the benefit of the Catholic Association, under the chairmanship of the popular Canon O'Sullivan, and had taken as my theme the action of the Church in promoting the early civilisation of Europe, I was distinctly startled, a couple of days after my return to London, by this question from Parnell :—

‘But, O'Donnell, do you really believe that the Church was ever a civilising agency?’ ‘Why certainly, Parnell, every man who knows European history must know that.’ ‘All I can say,’ fiercely replied Parnell, ‘is that I believe the Church to have been the constant enemy of human progress in every country and



in every age.' 'My good Parnell,' I replied, 'that only shows that you are unacquainted with the very alphabet of European history.'

He looked very angry, and I was rather angry. But after a few days we had resumed our old relationship. He was in effect either a Low Churchman, more Rationalist than Evangelical, or he was Rationalist altogether. In the defence of Bradlaugh he joined T. P. O'Connor with a fierce enthusiasm. On one occasion, when Bradlaugh's violence had forced the Speaker to have him bodily removed by constables, Parnell and T. P. O'Connor were foremost of the faithful few who ran out of the House to condole with the burly champion. One of his closest friends was Mr. J. J. O'Kelly, M.P., formerly of the *New York Herald*, who was proud of his intimacy with the Extreme Republicans in Paris, and in the year 1884, I believe, he persuaded Parnell to accompany him to Paris, where they made a regular round of the Red Press, and excited no small astonishment among French Conservatives, who had been accustomed to think of Ireland as 'L'Irlande Catholique.' As this news readily filtered through London to Dublin, the sensation was vivid in more than ecclesiastical circles. On another occasion when Monsieur Clemenceau visited the House of Commons, and was accommodated with a seat under the gallery, Parnell again shocked his more devout supporters by warmly welcoming the avowedly infidel leader of the French Jacobin party in the presence of the whole House. As I was on terms of intimate friendship with one archbishop and five bishops at that time, I learned without delay that Parnell was regarded as a dangerous and formidable enemy of religion in the most influential circles of the Irish Catholic Church. When we read the furious violence with which the clergy assailed Parnell as soon as they had the opportunity, it is only just to the bishops and priests who denounced so ruthlessly him and his followers, male and female, that a deep conviction that Parnell's supremacy would yet work hurt to religion in

Ireland had long since become very general, even among Catholic ecclesiastics who under ordinary circumstances were disposed to confine themselves to religious concerns. All these considerations, however, although they may explain, cannot justify the action of the churchmen in their violent interference with the national policy and administration of the nation on the pretext of a lapse of private morality, far from unusual among scores, if not hundreds, of public men in all ages and countries with whom the Church had contrived to get on, not only on terms of sufferance, but sometimes of enthusiastic support and public admiration.

It would appear as if the hypocritical anathemas pronounced upon Parnell on the pretext of morality, but under the impulsion of politics, have not ceased to affect the constancy or the courage of the dead leader's countrymen. At least, a piteous appeal which was seen in the daily press in the last months of 1909 would seem to support the conclusion, either that Parnell had been forgotten, or that a good many Irishmen were miserably afraid. The appeal was written by Mr. T. M. Harrington, M.P., one of the stalwarts of Parnellism, who never deserted the chief to whom he had promised loyalty. It happens that a subscription of Irish Americans has obtained a magnificent statue of Parnell from the hands of the great American sculptor Saint-Gaudens. The price was £7000, which was defrayed in America. It only remained for the Irish at home to erect the pedestal, at a cost of £3000. Mr. Harrington complained that, after a quest of a couple of years, the petty sum of £3000 still remained unsubscribed, and Parnell's statue remained in some barn or shed for want of this completion. The story is an apt commentary on the facile enthusiasms and facile desertions common to modern exhibitions of what is called patriotism on Liffey-side.

I may mention that Sir Charles Russell did not think fit to extend his championship of Parnell from the Land League to the Divorce Court. He might still be grateful to the friend of Egan and Ford for the seat in Parliament which opened the way of honours; but the stronger gratitude,

which has been defined as a sense of favours to come, kept him on the side of Mr. Gladstone until a second Attorney-Generalship in the Gladstone Ministry of 1892 was to waft him to the judicial bench and the Lord Chief Justiceship of England. After all, Russell's services to Parnellism in the case of *O'Donnell v. Walter* and during the Special Commission were fairly sufficient to discharge the debt of the Dundalk election of 1880. Still, it is worth remembrance that only fifteen years separated Russell's standing as a parliamentary candidate under the ægis of Biggar, Egan, and Parnell, and his final translation to the highest dignity of the English judiciary.





## EPILOGUE

XXVI. IRISH PARLIAMENTARIANISM AND NATIONALISM FROM THE FALL OF PARNELL TO THE PRESENT DAY

XXVII. INTERVENTION IN GENERAL AND IMPERIAL AFFAIRS

POSTSCRIPT. IRELAND AFTER THE LAST ELECTION





## CHAPTER XXVI

### IRISH PARLIAMENTARIANISM AND NATIONALISM FROM THE FALL OF PARNELL TO THE PRESENT DAY

THE MISERABLE SPLIT—Violent Scenes and Recriminations—Mr. Gladstone's Second Experiment in Home Rule—The In-and-Out Bill—Mr. Redmond's Criticisms—From Gladstone to Balfour *via* Rosebery—The Tweedmouth Cheque and the End of the Split—Mr. Balfour's Attitude—The Congestion Policy—The Continuous Decline of the Gentry.  
' RES AD TRIARIOS '—The Education Chaos—Lord MacDonnell's Council Bill—Maynooth and Home Rule—The Sound Loyalty of the Church—The Gaelic League—Sinn Féin—Electoral and Financial Organisation of the Parliamentary Party—The Patrons of Ribbonism.  
THE IRISH IN AMERICA—The Irish who are ex-Irish—Irish Americans and American Imperialism—The Parliamentarians and Militant Nationalism.

#### I.—THE MISERABLE SPLIT

FOR the miserable period of Irish history which has followed the miserable tragedy of Charles Stewart Parnell, there could be no more appropriate motto than that sinister declaration of Mr. Gladstone himself, 'I would rather see Ireland disunited than see it Parnellite.' Disunion, public and personal hates, outrageous vituperations, were to fill the most of the years after the discrowned favourite had been laid in his grave. There can be no doubt that the popular resentment, outside of the electoral masses at the disposal of the clergy, was violently aroused against the deserting lieutenants and all their followers. We have the admission of many of the latter, that their personal safety was seriously imperilled by the vehemence of the popular anger and regret. At a public meeting of his section of the divided party, Mr. John Dillon declared that bands of men were organised to howl him down as 'Dillon the murderer.' Mr. William O'Brien wrote a long letter to the paper which had been set up to represent the clerical

and Gladstonian side, to protest against the 'diabolical charge' that Mr. Dillon himself had hounded to death their ancient chief. The language of *United Ireland* gave, indeed, ample ground for fear of violence. A leading article, under the heading of 'Done to Death,' did not mince its accusations against the lieutenants. 'They have killed him. Under God to-day we do solemnly believe that they have killed him. Murdered he has been, as certainly as if the gang of conspirators had surrounded him and hacked him to pieces.' The Gladstonised party were pithily described as 'leprous traitors who talk of morality with a lie in their hearts.' Mr. William O'Brien found himself elevated on a neo-classical pillory as 'dead Caesar's Brutus.' The question, 'Shall Ireland exact no punishment for this fatal perfidy?' was quite calculated to invite direct retaliation. Parnellite poets arose in their wrath to declare:

There he lies before us, foully slain;  
And the slayers? his own trusted brothers—  
Lo! we brand them with the seal of Cain!

It was perhaps inconsiderate, it was certainly premature, on the part of the lieutenants, to propose to the mourning Parnellites to let bygones be bygones, to unite the party again, and to renew the old comradeship within a week or two of Parnell's funeral. The Parnellite organ replied, as might have been expected, with another glowing article headed by an enormous 'no!' which introduced the declaration: 'We can make no friends with you. We cannot join hands over his grave with the people who killed him. No, No! Our chief! our chief! they who killed thee come to us with words of friendship, and they ask us to tear from thy new-made grave the green banner we laid upon it with love and reverence, and to place there instead the red flag of the conqueror. No, by heaven, no. Shake hands over his grave!' At the same time the angry followers of the departed chief made no concealment of their views as to the special enemies who had struck him down. In its issue of November 7, 1891, *United Ireland* proclaimed:

'The clerical power must be fought; it must be fought and conquered.' In the interval between the death of Parnell and the General Election of 1892 the Parnellites endeavoured to prepare for the intended conquest; but when the general election was over it was the Parnellites who were conquered. They had been thirty men after the secession from Committee-room 15; after the General Election of 1892 they were only nine. Clericalism and Gladstonism were represented by seventy-seven Irish members of Parliament. That general election had been fought in many places with downright savagery, and it is difficult to give the palm of violence to either side over the other. Perhaps the internecine struggle reached its bitterest in the County Meath. There Mr. Michael Davitt had come forward for the second time as an anti-Parnellite candidate. He had previously contested Waterford city against Mr. John Redmond on the lamented death of Mr. Richard Power—the gifted and popular Rick Power of Home Rule days—who had died suddenly a few days after his marriage. Davitt might indeed claim the credit, such as it was, of having been the first of the lieutenants to declare against Parnell on the news of the verdict in the divorce case. As I have shown from his letter of the year 1884, Davitt was already at that date an anti-Parnellite, though admitting that 'so many had taken stock in Parnell that nobody could afford to confess his error.' Parnell, too, had been obliged openly to repudiate Davitt's attempted application of Socialism to Irish land, which was certainly not the object in view with the Irish farmers when they were organised against payment of rent. They had not repudiated individual landlords in order to place themselves under the yoke of the Landlord State. Parnell had indeed gone so far as to say, half in jest and wholly in earnest, to various persons that 'perhaps the first necessity of the Home Rule Parliament would be to lock up Michael Davitt.' Davitt had now become the editor of an English working-class paper, entitled the *Labour World*, which did not live very long, and which left Davitt very poor. Davitt always was a



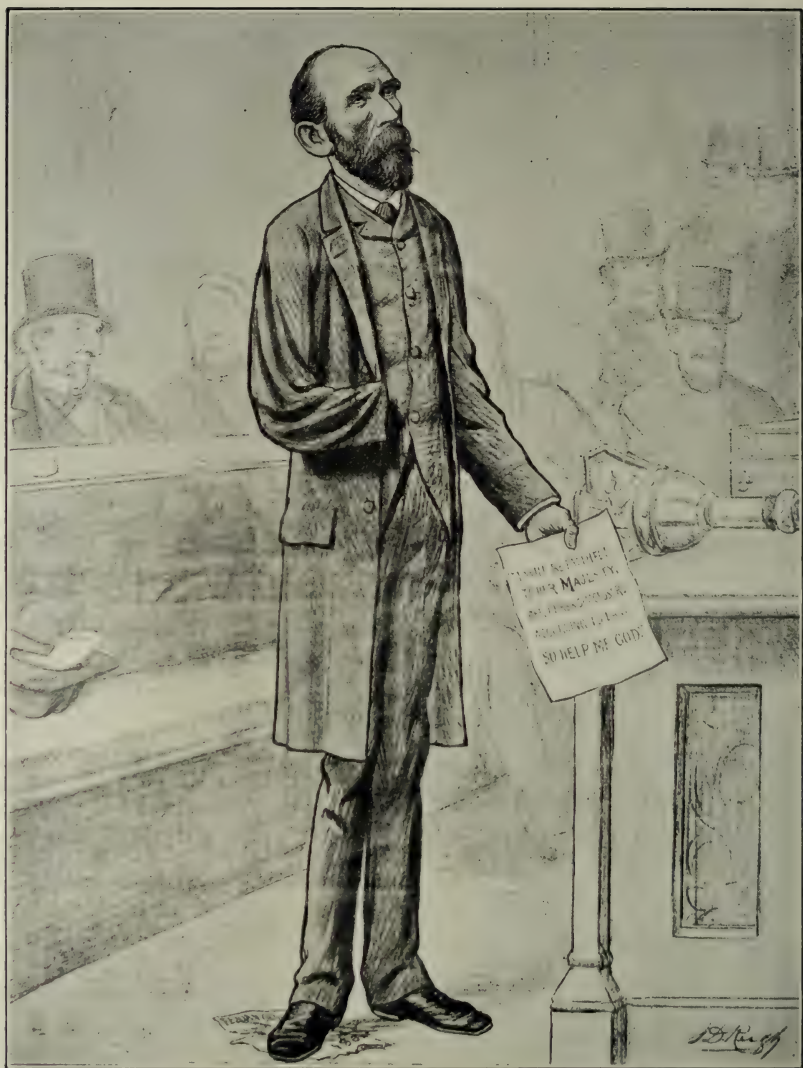
cosmopolitan workman far more than an Irish Nationalist, and his Anglo-American Socialism was quite incapable of understanding the rights and the wrongs of the Irish situation. He now stood for Meath, and, notwithstanding the sanguine hue of his economic opinions, was supported by the bishop and clergy with a zeal which the election judges were afterwards to condemn as amounting to corrupt practice and intimidation. To quote the testimony of an anti-Parnellite upon the contest :—

These things induced the Parnellites to throw all their energies into the struggle. In the heat of their wild excitement all respect for the clergy seemed to have perished. They commonly designated the bishop by an offensive name ; some of them used to come under the windows of his residence at night shouting defiantly, and groaning for him. In the course of one of the street rows, Mr. Davitt, bleeding from a severe scalp wound, tried to staunch the flow with his handkerchief, which soon assumed a crimson hue, whereupon he was scoffingly told by a voice in the crowd, that he was ' hoistin' England's bloody red.'

The reduction of the Parnellite strength in Parliament to the insignificant total of three-quarters of a dozen was hardly compensated by the increasing freedom with which the Parnellite press declared that ' the hand of the Irish church is to-day at the throat of the Irish nation.' That was true enough, but the practical accuracy of the statement can hardly have been accepted as a consolation for the fact.

It must be said for the intervention of the clergy, once that intervention had occurred, that it was difficult to see anywhere in Ireland a political party with more claims to a national character than the party of the priests. The Land League had so completely torn up the basis of a united nationality, had kindled such unextinguishable animosity between the various classes of the Irish nation, and had finally resulted in such a piteous collapse for its leading representative—the shattered idol that was now lying in a Glasnevin grave—that there really appeared to be no





PARNELLITE CARICATURE OF MR. DAVITT, THE FORMER FENIAN,  
SWEARING ALLEGIANCE.



party or power in Ireland, except the political clergy, who even possessed the power 'to pick up the pieces.' Fortunately or unfortunately, picking up the pieces of national efficiency was about the very last object which the political clergy had in view. Nor can a politician, habituated to methods of party politics, express any keen surprise at the failure of the bishops to lend their hand to a work of national consolidation, which would necessarily restore the era of lay supremacy that continued paralysis of the national powers might be expected to extinguish for ever. If the Irish clergy were tricksters or pretenders more might be hoped from their action; but as they are desperately in earnest in their conviction that everything is in the best place when it is in the hands of the churchmen, the very intensity of their convictions renders still more baseless any dream of their active concurrence in the restoration of public independence. I shall refer at more length to this important topic when I come to discuss the Irish Councils Bill of Sir Antony MacDonnell.

I can hardly avoid mentioning Mr. Gladstone's second Bill for the establishment of what he called home rule in Ireland. It was very much like his first Bill on the subject, with this exception, that an Irish representative body, consisting of eighty members, was to be entitled to attend the Imperial legislature whenever questions avowedly affecting Ireland were under discussion. As soon as these questions were settled, the Irish contingent was to retire to the Irish shores or thereabouts, and were to remain outside of the Imperial Parliament until another Irish measure invited their return. They were not free to vote against an English cabinet on an English or Scottish question, but they were perfectly free to vote against it on an Irish question. Thus a ministry, though possessing a normal majority of fifty or sixty votes on questions of British interest, might be summarily overthrown by a division on some question relating to Ireland which would authorise the eighty Irish representatives to cast their votes for the Opposition. The Bill was popularly named the In-and-Out

Bill, in consequence of this delightful provision. Like his former piece of work, Mr. Gladstone's Bill number two had the advantage or disadvantage of being constructed without the counsels of the representatives of Ireland. The Bill had been elaborated by a committee of the Cabinet, consisting of Lord Spencer, Lord Herschell, Mr. Campbell Bannerman, Mr. Bryce, and Mr. John Morley, under the presidency of Mr. Gladstone. There were thus three Scotsmen, two Englishmen, and a Jew on this important body, for the consideration and framing of the future government of Ireland, and not a single Irishman. It bore, indeed, no resemblance whatever to the only Irish constitution which had historical validity, the constitution of the suspended Irish Parliament itself, and resembled nothing so much as the erection of a trial edifice by an amateur constructor. The new building might delight the fancy of its enthusiastic author, but the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the persons who were intended to live in it might fairly be called an essential part of the matter. The Bill, at all events, was pressed upon the House, and the third reading was finally carried by 301 votes against 267, being a majority of 34. The majority for the second reading was 43, so there had been a considerable drop in the number supporting the Bill in the interval since it was brought into the House of Commons. It was significant of the altered relations between Mr. Gladstone and the members who still professed allegiance to the name and policy of Parnell, that the Bill was mercilessly criticised by Mr. J. E. Redmond, M.P., the sessional chairman of the little party of nine which still represented the great name of Parnell. This speech of the Parnellite successor deserves special attention, not only for the fact of the criticism which it contains, but for this circumstance in addition: that since the subsequent proclamation of a peace and fusion between the two opposing sections of the great split, Mr. Redmond has professed a willingness to accept, as a measure of proved and guaranteed moderation, the passage of this Bill. When we find that he opposed with

biting force, both of speech and argument, the toleration of the measure in the first place, it might be asked, Why is he offering to vote for it now, when he criticised it so contemptuously when introduced by its original author? Various British premiers, down to Mr. Asquith the other day, who have nibbled at the voting exigencies of the Irish situation, and have sought to capture the shy quarry, without shocking British feelings, with promises of 'self-government subject to the supreme and indefeasible supremacy of the Imperial Parliament,' might usefully reflect that the model self-government of the kind, the In-and-Out Home Rule Bill of 1893, was criticised and rejected by Mr. J. E. Redmond, M.P., in the following terms of undisguised hostility :—

We have endeavoured, using such opportunities as were open to us, so to mould the Bill that it would satisfy what we considered to be the necessary conditions of a reasonable settlement of the question. I regret now, at the end of this discussion, to think that every single effort of ours in that direction failed. Those portions of the Bill which we regarded as objectionable and dangerous we voted against, but our votes were overborne ; those portions which we considered faulty and defective, we endeavoured to amend, and again our amendments were rejected by the Government, and by the overwhelming majority of the House. The changes which have been made in the Bill are, in my opinion, changes which, on the whole, are for the worse and not for the better. . . .

. . . As the Bill now stands, I maintain that no man in his senses can any longer regard it either as a full, a final, or a satisfactory settlement of the Irish Nationalist question. The word 'provisional' has, so to speak, been stamped in red ink across every page of this Bill.

No man can claim that such partial and restricted powers as are conferred by this Bill can by any human ingenuity be invested with any element of finality.

It was in vain that the Gladstonised ex-Parnellites, who to the number of seventy-nine had been so triumphantly returned by the clergy at the late election, endeavoured to obviate the impression created by the frank declarations



of Mr. Redmond. What startled them, as it had startled the House, was the Parnellite leader's emphatic criticism that the word 'provisional' was, so to speak, stamped in red ink across every page of the Bill. If this were true, what indeed would be the use of considering it further? It was in vain that the most representative orators of the ex-Parnellite ministerialists were put forward to explain away the effect of the Parnellite sneer. Mr. John Dillon battled bravely to maintain that though the Bill could not be called final, yet nevertheless it ought to be taken as amounting to finality. He admitted that it was not likely to remain 'like the laws of the Medes and Persians, as we are told in our school-books,' but he felt sure that the Irish people would accept it sufficiently long for it to be considered a settlement of the Irish demand. Mr. Justin McCarthy, who had been the original channel of Mr. Gladstone's denunciations of the Irish leader, also endeavoured to repair the breach which had been made in the enduring character of the measure. He, Mr. McCarthy, like Mr. Dillon, had also to admit that it would be 'foolish and futile' to suppose that the measure was never to be amended. Mr. Redmond's own offer to vote for the Bill which he had so scornfully depreciated did not relieve the anxieties of English opinion, Mr. Redmond only declaring that the Bill contained a certain promise in the direction of self-government as the Irish nation demanded it. It was, he said with bitter mockery, 'like the toad, ugly and venomous, which yet wore a precious jewel in its head.' The permanent gratitude of the Irish nation for Mr. Gladstone's considerate offer of an ugly and venomous toad seemed to be at the least problematical. Mr. Chamberlain, in the name of the Liberal Unionists, expressed his doubts whether the measure, for which no more could be said than that it might not be altered to-day or to-morrow, could really be considered worth all the trouble which had been taken with it. When the Bill got to the Lords it was thrown out, on September 8, 1893, by a majority of ten to one, being only 41 votes for the Bill and 419 against it. The next year, Mr. Gladstone,

bending at last under the infirmities of advanced age, resigned his premiership, and retired from the House of Commons. His varied eloquence, his generous sympathies, his versatile genius, had cast a glamour over his treatment of Irish questions which often concealed the fact that the treatment had brought no remedy. There was, indeed, a curious inappropriateness and irrelevance about all his contributions to legislation for Ireland. In order to conciliate the Fenians, who did not care a row of pins about ecclesiastical questions, he had disestablished and disendowed the Irish Protestant Church. As was currently remarked in Dublin, 'that is all very well for Maynooth, but what about Dungannon?' Dungannon is famous in Irish patriotic history for the Convention of the Irish Volunteers, which demanded the national independence of the Irish Parliament. Mr. Gladstone next took up the settlement of the land question, and his settlement has been the cause of Amending Acts in nearly every year since he set his hand to the settlement. Still confronted by the discontent of Ireland, he undertook to recognise the indefeasible right of the Irish nation to govern themselves; and as an earnest of his convictions on the point, insisted upon the Irish getting rid of their leader at the behest of an English statesman. But though Mr. Gladstone never passed the fringe of the Irish problem, his promises and his personality have gone to the hearts of millions of the Irish people; and if a project to raise a statue to him were seriously proposed in Ireland to-day, it is more than probable that it would obtain fifty subscribers for the one who would pay to commemorate the memories of Parnell and Butt. It takes national tradition and national constancy to found and to maintain a nationhood.

Mr. Gladstone's disappearance was followed by the premiership of Lord Rosebery; and Lord Rosebery's pronouncement that England, as the predominant partner, must be the final authority on the Home Rule question—though perfectly defensible as a truism—inaugurated movements of opinion which, among other things, totally swept away

the Liberal majority in Great Britain. The elections of 1895 brought in the Conservative party and the famous and futile decennate of 1895-1905. The general character of the Conservative decennate as regarded Ireland had been fairly foreshowed already in the chief secretaryship of Mr. A. J. Balfour during the Salisbury Ministry which followed the rejection of the first sketch of Gladstonian Home Rule in 1886. Menacing resistance to demands for fresh interferences with the latest land laws, and then extensive incorporation of the denounced innovations in a ministerial Bill concerning Ireland. An attitude of settled hostility, I might say contumely, towards the members from Ireland, together with a reverential attention to the wishes of the Irish Catholic clergy as the acknowledged masters, and expected moderators, of the Irish situation. Lord Randolph Churchill's maxim of British administration west of the Irish Sea, 'We must govern Ireland through the bishops,' was frankly adopted as the supreme wisdom of Dublin Castle. The crushing rout and ruin of Parnell the dictator, Parnell the pasteboard king, had transferred to the Irish Catholic episcopate all the prestige which used to be possessed by their defeated opponent. Chief secretaries no longer troubled to consult either or both of the lay puppets who exchanged what the vocabulary of Dublin politics styled sweeping-brush language. It was not worth consulting Mr. Redmond, who only controlled nine votes; while with regard to the Dillons, McCarthys, O'Briens, and the rest, why go to the men when they could go to the masters? I am only concerned with facts and actualities. Butt had gathered around him the representatives of every class in Ireland; and Butt was a real power in the land. Parnell appeared as the leader of a democratic confederacy which left out no district inhabited by Irish-descended persons. Nobody doubted that Parnell was a ruler; at least nobody outside some privileged observers. Now all that was changed. One of the courtliest and most admirable members of the Society of St. Ignatius had predicted to me in 1890, 'Within ten years the Church will be supreme



in Ireland.' He might have said, 'Within five years.' The fact was accomplished. The Parnellites had, in effect, lost their last chance of holding their own against the churchmen when the *Freeman's Journal* turned clerical. The priests had collected £36,000 for the foundation of a rival paper. The *National Press* was equipped with the best machinery, and was started with the benedictions of the church. Within a week substantial shopkeepers were shifting their advertisements from the old to the new paper. More than half of the *Freeman's* subscribers imitated the example of its advertisers. The directors of the *Freeman's Journal* met hurriedly, and within twenty-four hours all Ireland knew that the Parnellite daily had gone over to the Church. The furious Parnellites organised a mock funeral of the deserter, and solemnly committed the coffin to symbolical flames; but that did not alter the fact that they had lost their leading organ. Soon afterwards the two papers coalesced, as there was no longer a reason for rivalry; and to-day you may read in the extended title, *Freeman's Journal and National Press*, the abiding memorial of the day when the Parnellite shareholders, like the possum to Colonel Crocket in the American story, exclaimed to the conquering ecclesiastics not to shoot, because they were coming down. When we reflect that Parnellism was reduced to nine members of Parliament, representing mostly urban constituencies free from the rural multitude, we can realise that the Parnellite game was soon seen to be a lost one. I remember meeting at this time all the heads of the party together—Mr. Redmond, Dr. Kenny, Mr. Harrington—and bluntly telling them to accept the olive branch on the next occasion that it was offered. My advice was condemned, but it was followed. Perhaps I was of the opinion that there was no serious difference, apart from the original split, between tweedledum and tweedledee. At any rate, I was disgusted at the mutual abuse, which appeared to me to be hardly worth continuation. Meantime a situation, a pecuniary situation, was in process of development which powerfully promoted the sacred cause of conciliation.

Immediately after the outbreak of hostilities, a pecuniary situation had begun to develop. Messrs. Dillon, O'Brien, and T. P. O'Connor, who were in America with the collecting hat, were obliged to cut short their important mission, because the American Irish buttoned up their pockets at the news of the scandal and the dissension at home. The buttoned pocket now represented the normal condition of what used to be the generous pay-chest for moonlighters and parliamentarians. Curious but not surprising to relate, it was the big battalions of the clerical parliamentarians, or the Gladstonised, which first felt the pinch of poverty. In the first place, they were seventy-and-nine, while Mr. Redmond had only to provide sustenance for nine. In the second place, the Church was not accustomed to supply meat and provender to others than its own. The famous scandal of the Tweedmouth cheques arose out of the sad quandary. Some time during the year 1894 the Parnellites became aware that subscription lists for aid to the McCarthyites or Gladstonised were circulating in wealthy quarters of the Liberal party. On September 1, 1894, the *Freeman's Journal* published the acknowledgment of £100 from Lord Tweedmouth and £100 from Mr. Gladstone to the parliamentary fund of the ex-Parnellites. Then the fat was in the fire. Lord Tweedmouth wrote to say that he had forwarded his eleemosynary gift in response to a begging circular from the offices of the Irish National League. Then Mr. J. F. O'Brien, M.P.—no relation of Mr. William O'Brien, M.P.—admitted that 'a year ago Lord Tweedmouth, then Mr. Marjoribanks, had written to him as treasurer of the League enclosing a cheque for £2000, a generous gift.' Then there was language all round. After Gladstonising the bulk of the Parnellites, was Mr. Gladstone's party now to be saddled with the payment of their breakfast bills into the bargain? When the old parliamentary hand had fervently declared his preference for a divided Ireland over a Parnellite Ireland, can he have foreseen that division would lead to addition and multiplication of pecuniary expenses to the Liberal party? One



A FAMOUS IRISH CARICATURE OF THE GLADSTONE HOME RULE BILL OF 1893.





result of the disclosure was, that it convinced the churchmen that the only chance of inducing Irish America to take a hand again in the sustentation of Irish members of Parliament was to heal the split between the warring factions who divided the parliamentary representation. Archbishop Croke of Cashel, on February 13, 1895, wrote to the *Freeman's Journal* to deplore that 'the hope of obtaining a Legislature for our country within measurable time is no longer entertained by reasoning men.' This was a cruel confession, but it was possibly intended to add weight to the recommendation which his brother Archbishop Walsh of Dublin was to make in the *Freeman* of three days later, February 16, declaring that 'nothing else but unity among its champions can save the Home Rule cause from crushing disaster.' Notwithstanding the piteous representations of the prelates, a week later the *Irish Catholic* lamented in its leading columns of February 23, that 'it is evident that at its best the response to Mr. Justin McCarthy's appeal for funds to support his party at Westminster will fall far short of what is required to meet exigencies.' Mr. T. M. Healy, M.P., who, notwithstanding his extreme tactics and language against Parnell, had failed of marked gratitude outside of the clergy, was accused of having been mainly instrumental in exposing the deplorable recourse to the Liberal cheque-book, and his position has never been popular in the party to the present day. Mr. Healy had written on September 3, 1894, that the party had been 'appealing to Lord Rosebery, to Sir William Harcourt, the Lord-Lieutenant, Mr. Morley, Mr. Asquith, and the rest of the Cabinet for funds.' Mr. John Dillon, M.P., had denounced Mr. Healy's statements as 'false and reckless.' It was clearly high time to do something which might cause the American money to flow again, though in a thin, diminished stream. The dissevered brothers gradually returned to each other's arms, and the election of the Parnellite leader, Mr. J. E. Redmond, M.P., to the chairmanship of the united party was felt to authorise a more hopeful assault upon the Irish-American pocket.

Mr. Justin McCarthy had acted as a stopgap leader after the Parnell catastrophe, but the claims of literature and journalism had prepared his resignation of a post which the squabble about money rendered less enviable every day. Mr. John Dillon was indicated by the favour of the clergy for the chairmanship of a party which had been made by the clergy. He has remained to the present day the special representative of Maynooth in the party from Ireland, and owes to this unbroken relation his exercise of a very real directorship over the policy of his colleagues. In spite of all the efforts of the sacristies, he failed to hold the chair, even after having been inducted into it. It was to no purpose that a specially telegraphed benediction from His Holiness the Pope had inaugurated Mr. Dillon's presidency of a convention of the Irish race at home and abroad. It was in vain that all the most orthodox journals contained elaborate descriptions of Mr. John Dillon's private audience with Leo XIII. Though the Pope was probably not the reporter, the account of the interview was most flattering to the high merits of the virtuous chairman of the Parliamentary party. There was something lacking to the solidity of Mr. Dillon's position, and the species of affection evinced in his regard by colleagues like Messrs. O'Brien and Healy entirely failed to supply what was required. Mr. Redmond, the chief of the rival fraction, had conducted the affairs of his miniature host with marked dignity and courtesy. None of the foul memories of the sweeping-brush era soiled his name. He had touched with perfect good-humour even the quarrels of his rivals, as when, borrowing an incident in the 'Ingoldsby Legends,' he suggested, in connexion with Mr. Healy's protean attacks on his beloved comrades, that :

Dillon with awe, when his tricks he saw,  
Said the Devil must be in that little Jackdaw.

The gratification of having such an urbane, prudent, and humorous presiding authority in the common chair may have sensibly facilitated the restoration of external unity between the rejoining fragments. The way was now clear



for more collecting tours to America, and a practice was resumed which both sides profoundly regretted to have been ever interrupted.

With Mr. A. J. Balfour leading the House of Commons the lot of the patriots from Ireland was usually the reverse of satisfactory. Master of an overwhelming majority, Mr. Balfour was more suave in manner than in matter. Entirely devoid of the limited sympathy with national sentiment which Lord Salisbury sometimes revealed to a powerful microscope, his nephew and heir contrived without any natural difficulty to express his slight esteem for Ireland and the Irish, unaccompanied by any mitigating sentiment of admiration for the Irish Parliamentary body, whether taken as individuals or collectively. I often thought, while unable to shake off a certain degree of liking for the Mr. Balfour whom I had seen so often in the most unattached position of the Fourth party, that there was a want of distinction in the placid cruelty of the leader of the House's attitude to the outnumbered and discredited members from Ireland. But this was Mr. Balfour's intellectual pose rather than his fundamental nature. I never could look upon Mr. Balfour as a Tory. He seemed to me to be the very incarnation of a cultured and conservative Whig. The Tory can be a democrat; but Mr. Balfour's democrats must understand at least the nice conduct of a clouded cane. An opportunist, if I mistook not, to the finger-tips, he was almost an ideal protagonist of acute debates which delighted the intelligence without agitating the soul. Though nationalism must be the enduring, and the only enduring, base of a composite empire, Mr. Balfour was always more disposed to comprehend a colony than a nationality. A flower of courtliness, at least in attitude, he raised around him, or suffered to rise around him, in Parliament, in the press, in society, in the administration, a peculiar avatar or embodiment of a narrow and pretentious sectarianism of race, or affected race, which many men of many nationhoods have resented, with a sort of revolt of their whole nature, as the very spirit of discourtesy and party of

insolence. A want of merit may be grave, but the fatal gift is the want of manners. Fifty times I have met men of small position, of no particular account, but redolent of this particular essence, whom a Quaker would have longed to cudgel, and whom an Irishman would love to . . . appreciate. Their commonest word is Empire and Imperialism ; but they are nothing but a parochial class in a superficial section of the society of a single country.

Mr. Balfour did not inaugurate, nor did he terminate, the mean expedient of excluding educated Irishmen from the higher posts of the civil service in India and at home, which has been such a bitter wrong to Irish places of learning as well as to the cheated students themselves. The Oxford plot for monopolising the public services has been fostered by confederates belonging to both the traditional parties. By the facile trick of packing the examination boards of the service examinations with examiners chosen in overwhelming numbers from the professors and tutors of Oxford and Cambridge, the chances of success are raised fifty per cent. in favour of the competitors who have received their training from those professors and tutors. I caused a question to be put in the House of Commons in the session of 1907 as to the number of examiners from Oxford and Cambridge on the one side, and Dublin on the other, at the recent examinations which had resulted in the success of some eighty per cent. of the Oxford and Cambridge competitors for posts in the home and India civil service. The answer of the minister was: 'Twenty-six examiners came from Oxford and Cambridge ; one examiner came from Dublin.' Of course, familiarity with the style and methods of your examiners gives an advantage of the most patent kind. Irish civil servants have been practically swept out of India, where they used to hold distinguished position ; and in the home departments all valuable berths are similarly secured for Englishmen. This scurvy trick is the work of the persons who profess a peculiar delicacy of Imperial sensitiveness and honour. The injustice to the studious youth of Ireland is all the more easy, and therefore

the baser, to commit, because the Irish Parliamentary party, affecting to disregard or despise the ambition to join the higher administration, leave such matters without notice or protest. Who is to be postmaster at Ballinafad? Why was bail refused to the accused in the Cappaquilty assault case? Such are the only topics which interest local intelligence and promote a reputation for representative vigilance.

Most Irishmen, without distinction of party, admit that Mr. Balfour's sympathy with real distress in Ireland was signalised, during his chief secretaryship, by a munificent use of the public money; and his successors, Mr. G. Balfour and Mr. G. Wyndham, generally followed his example or inspiration. To Mr. Wyndham belongs the special credit of the conference and the Act which facilitated the creation of a peasant proprietary by the concurrence, instead of the compulsion, of the owners of land. It is to the honour of Mr. William O'Brien, M.P., that, although violently hostile to conciliation at the outset, he has maintained an attitude of fairness and co-operation ever since he convinced himself that the landowners meant well to the tenants as to themselves. The discovery of a later government that equity was more expensive than confiscation has opened up a fresh and fertile chapter in the story of agrarian complication.

There is genuine gratitude due in many quarters to Mr. Balfour for his work during his chief secretaryship down to 1892, in the inception of the system of state beneficence in the west of Ireland, which has now culminated in a Congested Districts Board, empowered to appropriate at its own price the land of anybody it may choose for distribution among anybodys it may choose. Mr. Balfour saw that light railways would relieve the isolation of the poorest districts of the west, and that useful aid on economic principles might encourage, without serious pauperisation, a population of migrant labourers and haphazard fishermen. I believe he adopted the name of congestion as a euphemism for poverty from his predecessor, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach,



who had the fastidious Englishman-in-Ireland's dislike of calling Irish ruin by its proper name. To assist his benevolent projects, Mr. Balfour turned to the clergy. Were they not natural consolers of sorrow and useful auxiliaries of a Government which had few supporters among the Irish laity? When Mr. Gladstone, having seen Parnell buried and Ireland divided, returned to the premiership with a modest majority which Messrs. McCarthy and Sexton professed to hold 'in the hollow of their hand'—to hold, but never to hurt—Mr. John Morley went to Dublin Castle, where he had no favours to refuse to the venerable ministers of religion who had led the new voters to plump for Gladstone and Vaticanism against Independence and Parnell. As the Chief Secretary of the Liberal Vaticanism, he placed Mr. Balfour's foundation in the supreme care of Bishop Patrick O'Donnell of Raphoe, and Father O'Hara of Kiltimagh, the chief supporter and the nominator of Mr. John Dillon, M.P., in East Mayo. One hundred and sixty parish committees presided by parish clergymen arose to distribute the subsidies of the State among the persons selected by the parish committees. Bishop Patrick O'Donnell was also the chief trustee of the Gladstonised Parliamentary Fund, as well as an advanced Radical in politics. His appeal to the Irish masses 'to join in overthrowing the ascendancy of the classes' could hardly be improved by Mr. Morley himself. The Congestion Board, fortified on these lines of advanced Radicalism, succeeded in many things, but not in preventing depopulation, which might be supposed to be its reason for existence. Since the operation of the so-called Congested Districts Board, Ireland had lost three-quarters of a million more of its population, half of the loss of inhabitants occurring in the districts subject to the benevolence of the Board. 'The Congested Districts Board,' said Lord Dudley, chairman of the Congestion Commission, 'has tried for twenty years to develop new industries, and has failed.' Said Lord MacDonnell: 'The Congested Districts Board, having been working for fourteen or fifteen years, has only touched the fringe of the question.' The

employment of the churchmen as State Providences in Western Ireland may not have been a brilliant success from the economic standpoint. But their political preponderance is overwhelming. On the theory that the Government looked for competent laymen and could not find them, the incapacity of the lay population of Ireland for any kind of successful self-help becomes the fundamental truism of the whole Irish situation. In referring to the intimate dependence of Mr. John Dillon, M.P., on the clergy, and his consequent importance in the counsels of the post-Parnellite party, it may be instructive to cite the names of his leading nominators for the representation of his constituency. They are Rev. Father O'Hara, parish priest and member of Congestion Board; Rev. Father Keaveny, parish priest; Rev. Father McDonnell, parish priest; Rev. Father Henry, parish priest. There has been nearly £500,000 spent by the board in Mr. Dillon's pauperised constituency. It must be always understood that, as I am not disposed to question if the clergy are actually and really the only available directors of politics and business in Ireland, the probable conclusions of the reader as to the capacity of the existing population for self-government will not be anticipated, except by a mild observation that a nation calling for self-government, and yet falling under the absolute control of its spiritual pastors in the most secular and material departments of life and progress, is a curiously rare phenomenon in the annals of self-governed communities.<sup>1</sup> A man who always wants the care of somebody else is not a heroic object. The clergy have certainly grappled the Congestion Board to themselves with hooks of steel; and though they have not prevented emigration

<sup>1</sup> As I have already stated, the part played by the Irish Parliamentary party in Irish legislation is strictly confined to the perfunctory office of voting for the measures arranged between the Government and the masters of the party. The party supports the Congestion Board, demands more money and power for the board, denounces opposition to the board, but does not presume to review, examine, or amend the board. On such matters Mr. John Dillon, M.P., is usually found to be entrusted with the word of command. If the whole Parliamentary party were abolished to-morrow, there would be no change except a change of mechanism.



by all their beneficence at the State's expense, they have naturally utilised their legitimate opportunities as dispensers of the subsidies of the taxpayers. Relying with confidence on the British Government, and necessarily free from every serious rival, in view of the non-existence of an educated class of laymen, the Irish Catholic clergy must sometimes be almost embarrassed at the manner in which their modesty is entreated to take charge of all the matters which should seem to be furthest from the ecclesiastical sphere.

I do not venture to approve or condemn or even to estimate the scope of the various developments of the Irish land question, from the triumph of Mr. Gladstone and the clergy down to the present day. The agrarian position in Ireland is rendered so abnormal and exceptional by the circumstance of the alienation of the whole upper class of what is called the rural interest, that analogies drawn from other countries are really more instructive by their points of dissimilarity than by their points of likeness.

## II.—‘RES AD TRIARIOS’

I cannot seriously discuss the various proposals which have come from various sides for the amelioration of the Irish situation in recent, as in more distant, days. When once an English minister has taken his seat in the well-known room in Upper Castle Yard, it is almost wonderful how small is the difference which distinguishes him from his predecessor. Mr. Birrell may sketch out larger developments, but Mr. Balfour armed the Congested Districts Board with principles and a programme which will be described as paternal administration, or State Socialism, according to the point of view of the critic. In one fundamental feature the administration of Dublin Castle has remained unaltered under the rule of whatsoever English party ever since the last resistance of the last lay leader went down beneath the peasant columns led by the diocesan and parochial clergy of the country. ‘We must govern



Ireland through the bishops.' The maxim of Lord Randolph Churchill is common law for both English parties in Ireland. It must at least be conceded that the rule of the priest is immeasurably superior to the rule of the Land League, though even this general declaration must be taken with a reservation. If it suit the policy of the clergy to press home the movement against the Protestant landowners, it is quite possible that the results of the United Irish League directed by clergymen may not differ essentially from the results of the Land League directed by Davitt and Ford. We may assume that there will be far fewer outrages, but the broom will sweep clean, and all the cleaner, in the absence of outrages. As for the completeness with which the clergy govern such organisations as the United Irish League, a glance at the chairmen of the leading branches of the League, during any month you may select, will be amply sufficient to illustrate the statement.

Here are an average ten days of an average month, showing League meetings presided by Irish Catholic priests. Imagine a similar number of meetings in England, political meetings, presided by clergymen of the Church of England. The idea is simply impossible. So it would be impossible in Bavaria, or Austria, or Spain.

November 1.—Ballycorick, Co. Clare.

*Chairman.*—Rev. Father Monahan, C.C.

November 1.—Loughgiel, Co. Antrim.

*Chairman.*—Rev. D. Burke, P.P.

November 1.—Multyfarnham, Co. Westmeath.

*Chairman.*—Rev. J. Murphy, P.P.

November 2.—Taghmon, Co. Wexford.

*Chairman.*—Rev. Canon Furlong, P.P.

November 3.—Abbeyfeale, Co. Limerick.

*Chairman.*—Rev. Wm. Casey, P.P.

November 3.—Castledaly, Co. Westmeath.

*Chairman.*—Rev. L. Plunkett, C.C.

November 3.—Clontibret, Co. Monaghan.

*Chairman.*—Rev. P. Mulligan.

*Present.*—Rev. P. McNeaney.

November 3.—Crusheen, Co. Clare.

*Chairman.*—Rev. J. Nolan, P.P.

November 3.—Derrygonnelly, Co. Fermanagh.

*Chairman.*—Rev. P. H. Maguire, P.P.

November 3.—Downpatrick, Co. Down.

*Present.*—Rev. J. Hassan, C.C.

Rev. J. McKenna, C.C.

November 3.—Drummin, Co. Mayo.

*Chairman.*—Rev. Father McDonald.

November 3.—Dunkerrin, King's Co.

*Chairman.*—Rev. D. Murphy, C.C.

November 3.—Easkey, Co. Sligo.

*Chairman.*—Rev. W. J. Greaney.

November 3.—Eglisli, Co. Tyrone.

*Chairman.*—Rev. P. Hughes, P.P.

*Speaker.*—Rev. J. Donnelly, C.C.

November 3.—Errigal Truagh, Co. Monaghan.

*Chairman.*—Rev. Canon Callan, P.P.

November 3.—Finea, Co. Westmeath.

*Chairman.*—Rev. P. Kelly, C.C.

November 3.—Grange, Co. Sligo.

*Chairman.*—Rev. Father Hynes.

November 3.—Killaloe, Co. Clare.

*Chairman.*—Rev. Canon Flannery, P.P.

November 3.—Killinumery, Co. Leitrim.

*Chairman.*—Rev. E. Briody, C.C.

November 3.—Maryborough, Queen's Co.

*Chairman.*—Rev. M. Carton, C.C.

November 3.—Milltown, Co. Galway.

*Chairman.*—Rev. M. Diskin, P.P.

November 3.—Monasteraden, Co. Mayo.

*Chairman.*—Rev. Father Durkan, C.C.

November 3.—Mayo Abbey, Co. Mayo.

*Chairman.*—Rev. Father Murphy, P.P.

November 3.—Shanaglish, Co. Clare.

*Chairman.*—Rev. R. J. Nestor, P.P.

*Present.*—Rev. Father McMahon.

November 3.—Tubber, Co. Westmeath.

*Chairman.*—Rev. Father Hopkins, C.C.

November 3.—Tullow, Co. Carlow.

*Chairman.*—Rev. Father Fogarty.

November 6.—Dublin.

*Present.*—Rev. Father Behan.

Rev. E. M. O'Callaghan.

November 10.—Ballyrush, Co. Sligo.

*Chairman.*—Rev. T. Sharkey.

November 10.—Birr, King's Co.

*Chairman.*—Rev. Dean Scanlan.

*Speakers.*—Rev. Father Crowe, P.P.

Rev. Father Cunningham, C.C.

Rev. Laurence Gilligan, P.P.

*Present.*—Rev. E. O'Reilly, P.P.

Rev. Father Gelesman, P.P.

Rev. S. Slattery, P.P.

Rev. P. Drennan, P.P.

Rev. B. Donovan, C.C.

Rev. Father Barrett, C.C.

- Rev. Father O'Dea, C.C.  
 Rev. Father Calligan, C.C.  
 Rev. Father Fagan, C.C.  
 Rev. Father Crowe, C.C.  
 Rev. William Scanlan, C.C.  
 Rev. J. Cosgrave, C.C.  
 November 10.—Carracastle, Co. Mayo.  
*Chairman.*—Rev. P. J. Mulligan.  
 November 10.—Clogheen, Co. Tipperary.  
*Chairman.*—Rev. R. Phelan.  
 November 10.—Cloonacool, Co. Sligo.  
*Chairman.*—Rev. Michael Doyle, C.C.  
 November 10.—Creevelea, Co. Leitrim.  
*Chairman.*—Rev. C. Flynn, P.P.  
 November 10.—Easkey, Co. Sligo.  
*Chairman.*—Rev. W. J. Greany, C.C.  
 November 10.—Errill, Queen's Co.  
*Chairman.*—Rev. Dr. Brennan, P.P.  
 November 10.—Grange, Co. Sligo.  
*Chairman.*—Rev. Father Hynes.  
 November 10.—Killasnet, Co. Leitrim.  
*Chairman.*—Rev. P. O'Reilly, P.P.  
 November 10.—Killawallia, Co. Mayo.  
*Chairman.*—Rev. Father Forde, C.C.  
 November 10.—Milltown, Co. Galway.  
*Chairman.*—Rev. Father Diskin, P.P.  
 November 10.—Mooinecoin, Co. Kilkenny.  
*Chairman.*—Rev. P. Fogarty, C.C.  
*Speaker.*—Rev. James Brennan, C.C.  
 November 10.—Mulleek, Co. Fermanagh.  
*Chairman.*—Rev. J. O'Connor, C.C.  
 November 10.—Newbridge, Co. Leitrim.  
*Chairman.*—Rev. M. Kelly.  
 November 10.—Sooey, Co. Sligo.  
*Chairman.*—Rev. M. J. Brennan, C.C.  
 November 10.—Wilkinstown, Co. Meath.  
*Chairman.*—Rev. Patrick O'Reilly, C.C.

There is, of course, no concealment of these facts. They are taken from the public journals. The priests are not ashamed of the business. They regard lay affairs as being in their supreme hands just the same as spiritual affairs. If they admit a theoretical distinction, it is only theoretical. '*Res ad Triarios*,' as Mr. Gladstone cited from Cardinal Manning. The entire government of Ireland has been put into the hands of the priests. England's rule is Rome's rule. I record merely.

We may of course agree that it is infinitely better to have agrarian meetings and branches directed by Christian



clergymen rather than by the affiliates of Captain Moonlight and Co. Whatever may be said of the unsatisfactory condition of the land movement in Ireland to-day, at any rate it is vastly better than in the period when Mr. Patrick Egan was distributing his cheques among all the underground societies which made peaceful life impossible in Ireland a quarter of a century ago. Nay, more than this, it may be freely conceded that, in the existing circumstances of Ireland, it is absolutely impossible for any body of laymen, however reputable and respectable, to contest the directorship of politics with the reverend clergy. But a country which appears to have no alternative but to substitute priests for criminals, and to obey the dictation of the pulpit instead of the dictation of the blunderbuss, cannot be said to present a flattering result for a century of alien legislation and alien rule. Only a hundred years ago, in round numbers, Ireland was possessed of a great, able, and patriotic body of legislators, whom nothing but the violence and corruption exercised by an outside government prevented from continuing to rule and administer their country; and after a century of the English administration which was to introduce such notable improvements, we have the foregoing lists of the real administrators of Ireland. As the local branches of the League are also the effective authority in all elections for all kinds of local and parliamentary posts and situations, a glance at the foregoing lists reveals, as in a map, the completeness with which the ordinary lay people of Ireland are controlled in every department of civil and political life.

If I mention the post-Parnellite party in connexion with Irish education, I am driven to take refuge in some plagiarism of the famous chapter on 'Snakes in Iceland,' in order to do justice to its intelligent activity. There is simply no connexion between Mr. Dillon's or Mr. Redmond's members from Ireland and the promotion of education. When education made its appearance, as it frequently did, in debates of the House of Commons, the Irish members were solely expected to vote. The business about which

they were to vote had been settled above their heads between the Chief Secretary and their masters. But the Irish educational question bulked largely, nevertheless, in the pastorals of prelates and the promises of candidates for Parliament. The solution ought to have been exceedingly easy. Educational systems are now so widely planted in Europe and America that it should seem to present no serious difficulties to arrange and endow a method of popular instruction, which, while furnishing the necessary elements of culture to the humblest and most stationary classes, would afford the requisite facilities for higher studies to deserving students; first, in a large organisation of secondary schools; and then by university colleges, rooted, so to speak, in the secondary schools, generously endowed—as the most important of all public departments deserves to be endowed—and conducting the brightest young minds of the nation to the full possession of the literary and scientific attainments required by the modern condition of society and the competitive influences in contemporary civilisation. In a religious country like Ireland, there should be ample opportunities and guarantees for the training of the young at all stages in the religion of their parents. There was the example of Catholic nations by the score to direct the legislature. In other words, an intelligent co-ordination of the primary, secondary, and university systems, under a public department responsible to the nation at large, with ample provision for religious teaching by the clergy of the different denominations, and with the highest inducements in the teaching chairs to the best lay talent in the world of secular learning and science; such has always been the broad outline of the educational scheme required by Ireland and demanded by Ireland. There never has been any realisation of that simple and necessary ideal. Long ago the primary schools were scattered broadcast over the country without any outlet on a higher stage of instruction, without any connexion with the secondary schools, and without any secondary schools to be connected with. The



teachers in the Irish primary schools were deprived, and remained deprived, of the essential guarantees for efficiency and freedom demanded by their profession and by the advantage of the public. Not satisfied with granting the ministers of religion full control over the religious aspect of education, the legislature made every school teacher a sort of domestic servant to the minister of religion, who alone was empowered to appoint him, to promote him, and to dismiss him. The result has been to furnish Ireland with the most backward system of primary instruction in the civilised world. A number of poor, small, and struggling semi-secondary schools were in existence over Ireland, which taught in a small way the elements of a commercial education and the elements of a classical education. The masters were often competent, but poor and discouraged men. They received no assistance from the State. They formed no link in the system of public education. It never occurred to the London legislature that they ought to be encouraged, or that their system ought to be developed ; but it did occur to that legislature that here was another opportunity for paying court to the clergy, and the Intermediate Education Act established an endowment fund on such principles that within a few years all the secondary education in the country was in the hands of bodies of ecclesiastical schoolmasters—diocesan priests, Vincentians, Jesuits, Dominicans, with all their affiliates, male and female. It is always difficult in countries divided by religious distinctions to submit clerical teachers to public criticism. In Ireland there is no public criticism at all. We may credit the ecclesiastical orders, who have been helped in this way to the monopoly of what is called secondary education in Ireland, with the sincere desire to benefit their pupils as well as themselves. But without responsibility to the public, without the supervision of the public, without criticism, public or private, they carried on an undertaking which invited intellectual disaster ; and intellectual disaster followed. In the words of Bishop O'Dwyer of Limerick, the ablest educationist of the Irish



episcopate, giving his evidence before the recent University Commission : ' Nine-tenths of the pupils of the intermediary schools are lost. They are going to swell the ranks of the *déclassés*, without an education that is worth a button to them for any useful purpose.' The Chief Secretary, Mr. Birrell, is quite as explicit : ' The present scheme as it exists is repulsive. . . . It is a system of cram, cram, cram, divorced from teaching ; a system which murders the intelligence of the people. . . . The money now spent on intermediary education should be spent on improving the character of the schools, upon making them real educational and teaching places, and not in turning the little boys and girls of Ireland into money-making machines.' When a Catholic bishop and Chief Secretary agree in describing ecclesiastical establishments of education as ' not worth a button,' as ' repulsive,' as resulting in the moral and intellectual loss of nine-tenths of their pupils, as money-making machines ' which murder the intelligence of the people,' it is quite superfluous for the present writer to add his opinion. Just as there is no co-ordination between the bad primary system and the repulsive secondary system, so there has been no university at all for the mass of the population. Excellent universities were in existence. Queen's University and the University of Dublin were absolutely identical in their system and details with the undenominational universities of France, Prussia, Bavaria, Austria, Hungary, and the rest of Europe, which are yearly attended by scores of thousands of devout Catholics, including thousands of students for the Catholic priesthood. Maynooth went as far as it dared to ban and discourage attendance in these admirable institutions, but the real discouragement and the real bar lay in the fact that there was no primary or secondary education worth the name to prepare the masses of poor Irishmen for any education whatsoever.

Even should they reach the university, the whole of the teaching profession is forbidden, and remains forbidden, to the Irish students of letters, both man and woman, for the simple reason that all the places in the teaching profession

in Ireland are occupied by members of the various ecclesiastical corporations who conduct the teaching institutions described by Bishop O'Dwyer and Mr. Birrell. The English Government has lately added what is officially entitled the National University of Ireland to the existing establishments. Its constitution was secretly but notoriously arranged between Dublin Castle and the Board of Maynooth. Its governing body does not contain three men known to the learned world, but does contain, out of a total of thirty-six members of the senate, thirty paid employees and avowed adherents of the ecclesiastical corporations already described. The chancellor is the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin. In the Faculty of Arts, the University Faculty, as it has been justly called, eight of the most important chairs of lay scholarship are annexed by Catholic clergymen, six of them being Jesuits. In the statutes of the new university, the entire body of the educated Catholics of Ireland are strictly interdicted, for five years, from having a single member of convocation upon the governing body. What the British Government calls the National University for Ireland is a minor Maynooth, a select extract of ecclesiastical corporations and very little more. Of course, the obvious result of occupying the professorial chairs with ecclesiastics is to discourage the higher studies among young Irishmen, who would otherwise make the professorial career the object of their ambitions. Especially in a poor country, poor men cannot acquire a professorial standard of learning when deprived of the hope of being able to live by their learning as professors in the National University. Close the professorial chair against the laymen, and you prevent the layman from studying to become a professor. In old times, under Continental despotisms, that was called 'picking out the eyes of the laity.' Here again we have legislation intent upon catching votes and intent upon nothing else. In quitting this branch of my subject, I have only to repeat that there is no question of the Catholic religion or the Catholic clergy involved in the matter. The Catholic religion and the Catholic clergy, among hundreds



of millions of Catholics throughout the world, support lay universities and promote lay learning.<sup>1</sup> The contrary situation which exists in Ireland is purely the result of the English system, foreign to the Irish nation, which, devoid of national support, takes refuge in that fundamental maxim of Dublin Castle : ' England can only govern Ireland through the priests.'

A recent and side-splitting example occurred to afford the crowning illustration of the total insignificance of the post-Parnellite party except as pawns in the hands of their venerable players. Lord MacDonnell, when Sir Antony MacDonnell and Under Secretary for Ireland, was profoundly moved by the Irish complaint of the insufferable grievances of unrepresentative boards. In conjunction with the leaders of the Irish party, he prepared a Bill by which the principal departments of Irish administration, totalling an annual expenditure of some £5,000,000, were to be administered by an Irish elected board of one hundred members. It was not legislation, of course, but administration. Elected delegates of the Irish taxpayers were to be the supreme authority for the annual administration of £5,000,000. With their usual sensitiveness or obtuseness, the Irish Unionists already recognised the outlines of Home Rule. It was something less unknown, and far more feasible. If one hundred Irishmen of all creeds and classes could administer wisely and patriotically so large an annual sum, it would be a real demonstration

<sup>1</sup> There is no need to look to Catholic Bavaria or Catholic Austria for the example of Catholic students, both lay and clerical, attending the national lay university with the full approval of the authorities of their Church. In England the English Catholic laity, headed by the Duke of Norfolk, revolted against the pretension to debar them from the advantages of Oxford and Cambridge; and a university education in the famous seats of the national learning is now within the rights of the Catholic Englishman. The attendance at undenominational classes under Protestant teachers in company with Protestant comrades is recognised by Jesuits even as most conducive to good morals as well as true learning. In the words of Rev. Father O'Fallon Pope, S.J., writing of Oxford University as a place of study for Catholic students: ' Circumstances here appear to me to develop the young man in his Catholicism.'

It is superfluous to ask, What, then, can be objected to Trinity College? British statesmen, knowing well all this, and pretending to discover a Catholic grievance in attendance at an Irish Oxford, exemplify, at any rate, the imperviousness of the party politician to any considerations but votes and the masters of votes.



of national capacity. But the Irish Council Bill was to have no chance. The venerable clergy discovered that the Irish education department would come under the purview of an Irish elected board. Better a thousand times remain under the fostering affection of Whitehall and Dublin Castle. But it would never do to admit that the churchmen disliked the grant of power to the Irish elector. Certainly not ! What annoyed and exasperated the venerable clergy was, accordingly, that such an elected council might bar the way to a national parliament. 'We are affronted, insulted, outraged, with the offer of an Administrative Council when we are simply dying for our own parliament in College Green.' Mr. Redmond received peremptory orders. The pseudo-national convention, called to consider the matter, was not allowed even to discuss the project. Mr. Redmond, as chairman (!), moved the rejection of the proposal without debate or delay. The venerable clergy were relieved from the danger of 8000 poor devils of primary teachers, for instance, appealing to an elected council of Irishmen for the grant of some of the elementary rights enjoyed by the teaching body in every other country in the world. And it was all done because the venerable clergy were bent on nothing less than an independent parliament with the power of declaring peace and war !!! As a matter of absolute certainty, the one object of the most desperate alarm to the Irish Catholic episcopate has been, is, and ever will be, the establishment of anything like a popular parliament in Ireland. Imagine the whole of their Castle patronage, which to-day covers every department of public and private life, being transferred to a legislature representative of the Irish laity of all denominations ! *Quelle horreur !*

The Orangeman's apprehension that Home Rule will be Rome Rule sinks into insignificance compared with the Irish Catholic churchman's invincible conviction that it is quite certain to be the very reverse. And let us frankly admit that it is not merely for the unjust privileges which they enjoy under the present dispensation in Ireland that the churchmen,

the very best and noblest of them, will exhaust every ruse permitted by the most eminent casuists in order to put off to the furthest day the sovereignty of a national assembly within the sweep of the Irish shores. Cardinal Manning told me again and again that all the religious authorities at Rome were resolutely, vehemently, almost passionately opposed to Home Rule for Ireland, and that his own leanings in that direction caused him to be regarded with a distrust which became something like hostility after the death of his old patron, Pope Pius IX. Let us remember that the panacea propounded by Mr. Gladstone was not the historical constitution of Ireland, but a single-chamber assembly whose artificial safeguards and assurances would be swept away at the first breath of popular passion or greed. Let us remember that the idea of self-government cherished by Irish popular leaders, who have been thoroughly saturated with English Radicalism and something more, is all of the single-chamber and ultra-demagogic type. Let us imagine a virtuous anticlerical like Michael Davitt in command of that single chamber; and all the clergymen in Ireland obliged to wait upon the pleasure of a vote of that elegant extract-of-mob before being allowed to enjoy any of those favours and immunities which are now to be had by five minutes of friendly conversation with a more than courteous high official who knows what it is to be able to govern Ireland through the priests. The question of appointments to salaries would be the very first of the matters of dispute which would set the churchmen and the single chamber at open variance. There would not be a post under the Irish Government which would not have its candidate supported by the clergy and its candidate supported by personal or political factions among the laymen. To-day in Ireland the clergy dispose of an immense patronage. Will they be willing to surrender it to the front bench of an ultra-demagogic single chamber on the Liffey? And the best of the clergy must feel anxieties of a far holier character. How little the churchmen trust even the educated Catholics is sufficiently attested by the exclusion of the



educated laity from all power to share in the administration of the new clericalised university. What is called an educated Catholic may not be a Catholic free from worldly guile. It is some of the most popular and prominent of the existing members and leading members of the Parliamentary party, of whom one of the most influential of existing Irish bishops recently said emphatically: 'I would not go to heaven with that crowd.' The most reverend prelate used language which was strictly picturesque, and not intended to be construed in terms of theological accuracy. In substance and fact, however, if the picturesque expression was meant to convey that absolute confidence in the Home Rule party was a sentiment unknown to the heads of the Church in Ireland, then it hardly exaggerated the situation.

Why do the bishops and the priests permeate and occupy every section, stratum, and department of the Home Rule organisation, from the 'National Directory' to the village 'Branch'? Out of blind confidence in the capacity and will of the Home Rulers to manage their own affairs? Let us state the plain and evident truth. The churchmen oversee, and inspect, and direct, and occupy all these posts of control in the Home Rule organisation, the so-called United Irish League, because they do not trust the masses of the United Irish League one single inch out of their sight and hearing. They are the directors, the detectives, the paymasters, the recruiters of the League and the League Parliamentarians; and they are able to be all that, and they are able to maintain that control, precisely so long as the absence of a national assembly allows the lay masses to play at Home Rule without any power of legislation or government. To prevent the lay masses from ever obtaining that dangerous power is the constant care and the constant labour of all the political churchmen in Ireland. The prevention of Home Rule is equally, if not still more, the desire and aspiration of all the religious and non-political churchmen, who have always hated and detested the boycotters, and moonlighters, and intimidators, and would-be



confiscators in the various popular organisations, from the Land League of Davitt and Egan to the cow-hunters of contemporary agitation. English editors seldom understand, and English readers are seldom helped to perceive, what is perfectly patent and evident to the Irishman who is acquainted with Ireland, and who has no interest in concealing or disguising the obvious lesson. Though the Irish Catholic clergy were ready to make use of the popular agitation, in the first place for the purpose of procuring reforms which they believed to be necessary, and in the second place for shaking or destroying the ascendancy of the Protestant gentry, they were never in any doubt of the danger to society in general, and to the Christian religion in particular, which underlay the explosion of elemental cupidities and passions. The great Archbishop of the west, the Lion of St. Jarlath's, as he was called, Archbishop McHale of Tuam—like Cardinal Archbishop McCabe of Dublin—imperilled or lost his vast popularity by the earnestness and force with which he denounced the Land League in the days of its greatest power. The most respected heads of the Irish Catholic Church have again and again denounced, often by name, semi-Socialist agitators belonging to the League and its branches. We know that the Pope sent special missions of inquiry to Ireland, and that those missions resulted in papal condemnations of boycotting and the plan of campaign. We know, it is true, that numbers of Irish bishops made believe to attach small weight to the papal directions; but it does not alter the facts, both that the Pope publicly condemned the agitators, and that he more privately censured the prelates—like Archbishop Croke of Cashel—who adopted an attitude of friendly neutrality, to say the least. Was not the reason of the Pope's prudence, also, that he was assured by the Irish prelates that they were going as far as they dared against their flocks, and that they were only seeming to yield at present, in order to act with more authority at a suitable time? The greatest churchman in Ireland, Cardinal Logue of Armagh, has been studiously indefinite in his praises of the popular agitation.

Other great prelates, like Archbishop Healy of Tuam, have openly used language to the Irish farmers piquantly at variance with the flatteries to which those interesting rustics are accustomed. I remember how Archbishop Healy, only a couple of years ago, frankly told a congregation of western farmers: 'You do not cultivate a sufficient acreage, and what you do cultivate gets only an apology for cultivation. You do not deserve to be called farmers. You make a few spasmodic efforts at spring and autumn, and you sleep the rest of the year.' Other prelates, like the late Bishop McRedmond of Killaloe, left no doubt whatever on the minds of their hearers as to their opinion of some of the patriotic magistrates who had been placed on the bench by a sympathetic British Government: 'He had seen magistrates on the bench, men sworn to administer justice to the public; and often, too often, indeed, he had seen men in these positions violate the oaths they had taken in such a solemn manner. Frequently he had to leave these courts a wiser but a sadder man.' Among other persons whom Bishop McRedmond had seen violate their solemn oaths, the bishop mentions 'jurymen sworn to try cases according to the evidence before them, and witnesses who had invoked God's Holy Name in the most solemn manner to affirm the truth of their statements.' Is it conceivable that the bishops of the Catholic Church in Ireland, having these views on the farmers, the jurors, and the magistrates of the popular party, are in any real hurry to place that popular party in absolute control, as a national legislature, over life, property, and freedom of opinion in Ireland? Why did the bishops in their negotiations with Mr. Birrell insist on the exclusion of all representatives of the graduates of the National University—including practically nine-tenths of the educated Catholics of Ireland—from all share and participation in the government of the National University 'for five years' from the date of foundation? That meant that the Catholic laity were to be absolutely excluded from the government of a university professedly intended for them until the constitutions and statutes had been completely



framed and applied in their absence, and until it would be far too late for the excluded laity to make any effective protest. I do not enter into any examination of the justice or injustice of the proceeding. I merely ask, does such a wholesale and unexampled declaration of distrust of the laity by the clergy encourage us to conclude that the Irish clergy would readily trust the Irish laity with complete control over the national legislature of the country? The thing is self-evident. So far from welcoming any participation of the Irish laity, *as they are*, in the absolute and uncontrolled self-government of Ireland, the bishops and priests sedulously exclude them from every kind of position or authority of a far less potent and formidable scope and character. Look at that very list of League branches, with their interminable supplies of priest presidents and priest officials of every description. A flippant and superficial critic may declare with satisfaction, that here we have a League so powerful that it has brigaded all the clergy in its train. The practical reverse is evidently the case. Just because the League is so powerful as an organisation and implies such possibility of power, the clergy have taken the precaution of capturing all the places of influence and supervision from the highest to the lowest. Practically speaking, from one end of Ireland to the other, no fiery orator can open his mouth on a League platform except under the supervision of the parish priest in the chair. Granted that the presence of the parish priest does not prevent, and may not be intended to prevent, the utterance of an immense quantity of frothy and ferocious sentiments, may we not be perfectly sure that, besides the sentiments which are uttered, a great number of sentiments are not uttered just because the parish priest has taken care to occupy the chair? Look, again, at the machinery for collecting the pay and sustenance of the Parliamentary party itself. The chief trustee of the fund is a bishop. The subscriptions, which are announced in the columns of the *Freeman*, are almost invariably forwarded by local priests, chairmen and secretaries of local branches of the



League. Every dollar which the itinerant collectors bring back from New York and Chicago goes to a fund whose keys are in the hands of a bishop. If the clergy merely locked the till for a week there would be no distribution of parliamentary wages on the following Saturday. Superficial observers may imagine that the League has captured the Church. The fact is that the Church has handcuffed and padlocked the League, and gives it just the degree of liberty, and just the degree of licence, which suits the policy of the churchmen. That policy never, never will advise or support the creation of a national legislature, elected by laymen, filled with lay orators or incendiaries, and capable of making the most sweeping suggestions as to the rights of teachers, the control of universities, the preponderance of the Gaelic language, the promotion of Sinn Féin ideals. The thing would be hard to believe under any circumstances, and to those who know the cautious and conservative spirit of the Church of Rome it is quite inconceivable. The Irish bishops and priests will undoubtedly continue to profess their yearning love for the Old House in College Green, will continue to declaim against the alien Parliament ; but all the resources which can occur to bold and subtle minds, inspired by the keenest and subtlest casuistry, will be employed to prevent Home Rule from ever rising above the stage of pious aspirations. The Catholic Church has not rashly welcomed popular sovereignty in any country of the world, and is certainly most unlikely to make an exception in favour of the land in which popular sovereignty has been incarnated in the form of Michael Davitt, Patrick Egan, Captain Moonlight, and even Charles Stewart Parnell. Having got the lay leader down by an immense effort, the Church does not propose to resuscitate him in a hurry.

To cling with teeth and hands to the British connexion, and to persuade patriotic flocks of a dire determination to rend the British connexion ; to call for Home Rule on platform and in pastoral, and, as quietly as possible, to shelve Home Rule till the Greek Kalends ; this is the double and perpetual problem present to the politicians of the Catholic

Church in Ireland. It is easy to treat the plight of the most reverends in an irreverent and mocking spirit. In reality the bishops have to consider the gravest possibilities on both sides of their manœuvres; and it speaks well for their intelligence, or it speaks ill for the intelligence of their admirers, that the game has not been universally recognised long ago. It must be said for the British Government that the dilemma of Maynooth is sympathetically noted and sympathetically treated. Chief secretaries make no distinction of courteous attention between the prelate who has just sailed close to high treason and right across the track of sedition, and his most reverend brother who can observe a judicious neutrality. It is felt in Dublin Castle that a prelate who ceased to be popular would be an unimportant ally indeed. I remember reading the report of a speech by Mr. Redmond, M.P., at a banquet, where he hailed as 'a household word in Ireland' the name of the amiable Mr. Patrick Ford, the versatile dynamiter who wanted 'fifty good Irishmen' to set London afire 'some windy night.' No less than five senators of the National University, whose chancellor is an archbishop, supported Mr. Redmond, M.P., by their presence and applause. Did a chief secretary expect that chancellor to give those senators some pungent mark of displeasure? Certainly not. An Irish prelate who ceases to be patriotic ceases to be quite useful to the British connexion. 'Be all things to all men' is a maxim of infinite applicability in the politico-ecclesiastical administration of Ireland. Besides, it must be maintained with the utmost emphasis that the Irish bishops have reason to object to Irish self-government for reasons entirely independent of his Majesty's ministers. The able but uninventive and somewhat self-repeating writers of the English press, who picture an Irish parliament as perpetually hatching plans for the invasion of England, are naturally oblivious of the fact that the invasion of England is a perfectly uninteresting and unexciting topic in comparison with a dozen others which would infallibly come to the front before the Irish Mr. Speaker had well concluded his first experience of the



noxious importation from London called parliamentary obstruction.

I have already mentioned the humiliated condition of 8000 primary teachers as having sufficed to bring Sir Antony MacDonnell's Council Bill to a sudden end. That thorny and formidable subject could not be prevented from appearing at an early stage of any Irish parliament. The average Irishman wants the priest to have control of the religious and moral question in the school ; but the personal freedom and secular efficiency of the teacher have champions wherever three Irishmen are met together. The clergy could take shelter behind no British-appointed Board of Education in an Irish parliament. The reasonable emancipation of the schoolmaster might be expected to figure in the first debate on the first Address to the Crown. Then there is the vast question of the opening of educational situations to the talented Irish girls who have now to go governessing in foreign parts, because hardly any woman can get employment as a teacher at all, unless she takes the veil and vow of a religious order. Another question which is freely discussed wherever Irishmen meet is the necessity of introducing some system and some accountability into the collection and distribution of the funds which the Irish contribute so generously to every demand for the support of a religious object. In America committees of lay Catholics raise the money, maintain the repair and adornment of the churches, provide the salaries of the clergy—and account for every farthing to the community of the faithful. Mixed questions of burning interest also press for solution. Temperance will involve passionate struggles against the overgrown evil of drink and the drinkseller. It is not recognised in England that Ireland is burdened with one of the most appalling curses of usury which has ever corroded the vitality of every trade and occupation. But around the gombeen-man may stand defenders, civil and ecclesiastical, who will shield the Irish Shylocks against all the indignation of their victims. The single question of the eight professorial salaries of £500 a year each, which



have just been taken from the lay element in the National University and occupied by clergymen, might easily provide material for the downfall of half a dozen Irish cabinets. The learned men of Ireland are not so wealthy as to witness unmoved the passage of £4000 a year to the bank account of the most estimable body of clergymen, for services which essentially belong to lay professors to perform.

This is the fundamental fact, the bedrock fact, as our American cousins might say, of the Irish parliamentary situation, ever since the destruction of Parnell involved the destruction of lay leadership in the lay politics of Ireland. The churchmen who answered Mr. Gladstone's furious invitation to vaticanise Ireland rather than have it Parnellite, have been obliged, and will continue to be obliged—by their deepest convictions from their point of view—to prevent as long as possible the government of Ireland from coming into the hands of the lay people of Ireland. There is neither clericalism nor anti-clericalism in this statement. It is simply the recognition of the bedrock fact of the whole situation. I do not even presume to blame this policy of the Irish Catholic clergy. Self-government is a serious thing which involves the most serious issues. It involves the control and fate of the most important interests of the community, and of the Church, which is an essential portion of that community. A system of self-government, based on prudent principles exercised by men and classes of men who have given guarantees for order and integrity, need present no dangers either for Church or State. Who can assert, however, that the stipendiaries of Pat Egan and Pat Ford, the men who circulated incendiary and murderous literature—knowing it to be incendiary and murderous—the men who ordered the boycotting and directed the boycotting of their own countrymen and countrywomen for the mere exercise of legitimate rights; who can assert with any degree of confidence that such men, their followers, successors, and allies, can be trusted by the pastors of the Irish Catholic Church with the unlimited and illimitable powers of national self-government? It does not touch

the relevance of the inquiry that clerical members of that Church may have been soiled, and more than soiled, by complicity or comradeship in the production of the social disturbance and dirt of the Land League movement. The vast body of the churchmen were sound. The majority of the churchmen, who were compromised more or less, may have been heartily ashamed of the real or supposed necessity of their miserable action. In any case, the wildest curate of them all would probably decline to trust to his former companions the interests of religion with the same equanimity with which he sacrificed the interests of heretic landowners. At the same time, every churchman is aware of the peril of openly refusing to the masses even the promise of that self-government which has been dangled as a bait before their eyes. The alternative seems to be that the priests will continue to demand Home Rule in every variety of patriotic emphasis and enthusiasm, and will also continue to give Home Rule the go-by with all the ingenuity which acute minds, rendered still more acute by casuistic studies, are qualified to display. No man who knows the Irish clergy will contest this assertion of mine, that the vast majority of them would die a thousand deaths rather than willingly endanger a single interest of the sacred religion of which they are ministers. No more is necessary in order to render us absolutely certain that the vast majority of them would resist, by every means in their power, the assumption of sovereign rule by those Irish multitudes of which they have such good reason to entertain no exalted opinion. The classes of wise and moderate men who mustered around Isaac Butt, or who mustered around Henry Grattan, were one thing ; the masses of excited innovators who followed Egan and Davitt, or who follow their successors, are quite another description of foundation-stone for the erection of a nation. Whether any man approves or disapproves of the preponderance of the priest in Irish politics, at least it must be clearly comprehended that the priest is fighting, wisely or unwisely, for his deepest convictions and his most sacred duties.

It follows as a logical necessity that, when the directors of the Parliamentary party have resolved to evade the Home Rule solution as long as possible, the servants and followers of those directions must seize every occasion of putting off Home Rule to the latest possible date, and subordinating Home Rule to every plausible alternative. As I am writing, we can see another instance of the settled policy of the post-Parnellite party. The English Liberals, with whom influential parliamentarians from Ireland are so closely linked, have determined to make the practical abolition of the House of Lords, as at present constituted, the foremost object of Liberal effort in the constituencies and in the Parliament at Westminster. I do not enter into an examination of the motives or the methods. Here I merely note the fact as an historian. As an historian I am equally bound to note the probability that the struggle for a fundamental alteration of a fundamental factor of the British Constitution, as it has come down from the centuries, will be a difficult, a perturbing, and a prolonged movement which must practically amount to a social and political revolution. Again I decline to characterise the goodness or badness of that revolution. But one thing is clear from the Irish point of view. The deliberate postponement of the Home Rule demand until the English shall have abolished the traditional House of Lords, and shall have provided a more or less satisfactory substitute, practically postpones the Home Rule question altogether to a date which possibly need not concern any persons now living. What is the action of the post-Parnellite party and the League which it represents? The public press gave us the answer. The directorate of the United Irish League and the plenary meeting of the United Irish Parliamentary party met and determined by unanimous votes, enthusiastically supported or moved by Catholic clergymen, that their efforts were to be devoted to the solution of the problem of the House of Lords! The pretext or the argument for this relegation of Irish self-government to the paullo-post-future of politics was given half a generation ago by Lord Rosebery. Lord



Rosebery announced, while still a Liberal premier, that the reform of the House of Lords must precede the settlement of the Irish question ; and his lordship cheerfully intimated that the reform of the House of Lords might occupy a century. The most direct, the most vigorous, the most uncompromising adversary of Lord Rosebery and his programme was Mr. J. E. Redmond, M.P., at that time leading the little band who still upheld the name of the dead Parnell. To-day Lord Rosebery's discarded programme, which Mr. Redmond rejected in 1894 as evidently tantamount to the permanent shelving of the Home Rule question, is now formally and enthusiastically supported by Mr. J. E. Redmond, M.P., and the entire body of the post-Parnellite party. Why ? The answer is obvious, if we remember that the Irish Catholic Church welcomes, without saying so, every plausible pretext for putting off Home Rule until ' Latter Lammas ' ; and that the post-Parnellite party, being the absolute creation and the permanent dependant of the clergy, is loyally bound to postpone Home Rule to any distant season for which a pretext can be found. During the coming years of Radical agitation which are now promised to us, and during the British struggle for fundamental alterations of the British Constitution, the Irish clergy and their parliamentary puppets will continue to entrance the hearts of patriots by the eloquence of their wishes for Home Rule, and will also be able to guarantee the undisturbed maintenance of the British connexion in which alone they trust—by the facile expedient of waiting for the termination of the interminable discussion on Houses of Lords and Elective Senates and Secondary Chambers, which will be going on at Westminster and elsewhere—perhaps for the full period of Lord Rosebery's century.

An indispensable qualification of this statement must be added here. Though the Irish churchmen applaud the chase after the House of Lords, or any other quarry which may serve to divert their public from the pursuit of Home Rule, it must be understood well that the first moment that there is danger of the real creation of a single-chamber

convention at Westminster, to be supplemented by a single-chamber convention at Dublin, the alarm and terror of the entire ecclesiastical world interested in Irish affairs, from the Shannon to the Tiber, would at once approach a degree of tragedy quite unparalleled since the coming of Cromwell or the Battle of the Boyne. A single-chamber parliament at Westminster would—to the Catholic churchmen—be synonymous with the ascendancy of the most Calvinistic section of the Protestant religion, aggravated by the alliance of the most free-thinking section of the English democracy. The single-chamber convention at Dublin, established and commissioned by the similar body at Westminster, would inevitably involve principles of representation and legislation fatal to the most moderate claims of the political hierarchy of Ireland, and seriously menacing many of the most justifiable requirements of the Catholic religion. The chase after the House of Lords may then be expected only to endure so long as there is little danger of the noble quarry being broken up by the strangely assorted pack. The most elementary sense of justice obliges me to add that there is not a single move in the game which the priests are playing with such subtlety and determination that cannot be paralleled, at least in changefulness and variety, by a hundred combinations and recombinations in the history of government by party at Westminster since the Act of Union alone. We need not refer to preceding times. To espouse one cause in order to avoid another, to make a tremendous show of public anxiety on one account merely in order to divert public attention from a different matter, to demand advance in one direction in order to disguise the abandonment of former positions—these are tricks of the trade, familiar not only to veterans of parliamentarianism, but to every tyro who seeks to qualify himself for the smiles of the Treasury bench.

Two movements, operating in different spheres, but possessing a connected significance, have developed during the post-Parnellite period, and will be found to deserve the most serious attention of those who love and those who



hate the nationhood of Ireland. The first of these manifestations of sentiment was the league for the revival of the ancient Irish language, the originating genius of which was Dr. Douglas Hyde, a Protestant clergyman from the west of Ireland, whom the beauty of Irish myths and folksongs, on the lips of peasants innocent of the English language, had first filled with personal delight, and next inspired with the ambition to revive the neglected tongue enshrining such gems. It was apparently a forlorn hope which this Irish minister of a creed unpopular in Ireland had dared to undertake. All classes of the Irish population, including most of the most ardent Nationalists, had despaired of the old tongue. Worse than despair, they ignored it. The poets of Young Ireland wrote their songs of the nation in the speech of the Englishman's nation. But Catholic churchmen had practically abandoned it for generations before it had ceased to be spoken currently by the masses of the rural population. Few students for the sacerdotal ministry were required to study Gaelic at Maynooth, and hundreds of Gaelic congregations were obliged to take on trust the sermons of their spiritual fathers, who could not for the life of them say the Lord's Prayer in Irish. The consequences to the Catholic religion of the Irish race were calamitous. When the great emigrations began, and when literally millions of the Gaelic peasantry found themselves transplanted to the fields and cities of a new country, and when they and their children found themselves asked to give a reason for their faith in answer to the arguments or gibes of new fellow-citizens, the absence of pastoral instruction in the dogmas of their religion proved fatal in hundreds of thousands of cases to the retention of the formal traditions of Catholic usage which they had brought with them across the ocean. As for the world of politicians at home, they were content to demolish the Englishmen with an English volubility which the English could rarely imitate.

It was into this unpromising condition of affairs that Dr. Douglas Hyde, some dozen years ago, brought his enthusi-



astic advocacy and his untiring resolution. The Gaelic League was founded, the hearts and imaginations of the young men and young women were inflamed with a generous ardour. The study of the ancient speech has long since risen to a national and political fact of distinct importance. It still met with little welcome either from Church or State, but popular demonstrations and enlarging studies continued to demonstrate with increasing fervour that a new object of interest had arisen in Ireland. Of course it was inevitable that the influence of the clergy should be sought on behalf of such a movement. The question still remains to-day whether the churchmen will ever seriously put their shoulders to the wheel in order to give national supremacy to the resuscitated language. Undoubtedly, there are inconsiderate zealots among the apostles of Gaelic who would leave very little of a world of letters beyond copies or imitations of the Gaelic relics, which have more or less survived the accidents of centuries and the hostility of Norman and Saxon lords and Roman prelates. There is certainly more than a danger of anti-clerical tendencies resulting from over-meditation on the centuries long previous to Tudors and Cromwells, when the enemies of Ireland were not Lutheran innovators, and when the swords and spears of invaders were blessed with crusading privileges by popes of Rome. In the present stage of the movement, it is still premature to assert whether the bishops will do all that the Gaelic League demands, or whether the Gaelic League will have to do without the bishops. In either event, the action of the churchmen will be dictated by conscientious convictions deserving of the utmost respect, even when deserving of the utmost opposition.

The unenthusiastic attitude of the hierarchy in face of the Gaelic League has been naturally reflected in the aloofness of the Parliamentarians, which has been bitterly deplored by official organs of Dr. Douglas Hyde's association. Mr. John Dillon, M.P., has come forward quite significantly to warn the Gaels that their pretension to make the Irish language a compulsory subject of matriculation in the new

university, which has been called National, cannot be supported. When I used to defend the study of Gaelic forty years ago, it was as a patriotic complement of a general education. It cannot be concealed that there are many zealots of Gaelic to-day who would wipe out for young Irishmen the records of European culture, and confine their study to the fragments of an undeveloped form of speech with no practical connexion with modern or ancient civilisation, and with less numerical influence and range than some of the dialects of the Upper Amazon and many of the dialects of the lesser races of India. The facial gravity of the following suggestion, taken from a leading organ of these ultra-Gaels, is not unworthy of the suggestion itself.

In Irish education we have always urged that the youthful mind of Ireland should be fed on the classics of the Gael instead of the classics of the Greek. Or, if 'classics' savours too much of dry scholarship, we shall say that the building up of character, which is effected more by stirring the imagination than by mechanical exercise of the brain, should be based on our heroic tales.

If the Irish churchmen were all the obscurantists which some hostile critics have described, they could not achieve the ideal of reaction more thoroughly than by confining 'the youthful mind of Ireland' within such a Gaelic wigwam, in order to learn nothing but the primeval tongue of the tribe as reproduced by the help of O'Growney's lectures on Irish pronunciation. The post-Parnellite party may be congratulated on their aloofness from patriotic exaggerations of this description. No movement, however, is to be judged by its eccentricities, and we may hope that the proposed diet on 'the classics of the Gael instead of the classics of the Greek' has not yet been adopted as the exclusive nourishment of the Gaelic League.

The Sinn Féin movement, as it is called, has come with the professed mission to realise in politics and society the ideal in letters of the fore-mentioned braves of the Gaelic wigwam. In some respects it would not be incompletely

fitted by the old criticism that what was true in it was not new, and that what was new was decidedly not true. It professes to be based on one patent absurdity, the allegation that the Hungarians obtained the restoration of their constitution after Magenta and Sadowa, without reference to these crushing blows to Austria's power, by simple abstention from the consumption of Austrian commodities! By producing everything which she consumes, Ireland is to emancipate herself from dependence on England, and the millennium of Irish liberty and prosperity will have arrived when we shall have burned everything that comes from England except coals, as Dean Swift's irony suggested two centuries ago. At the same time, a foreign demand for the superabundant crops and manufactures of the country is to be stimulated by the appointment of Irish consuls accredited to foreign governments by the Irish nation—not yet recognised as an Independent State—with instructions to persuade the said foreigners of the superior merits of Irish goods and chattels. 'I am a consul accredited by the Irish nation, and I am commissioned to request you to drop the products of Birmingham, Sheffield, Manchester, or your own fields and factories, and to patronise, instead, the output of the industries that we are going to establish.' This simple—decidedly simple—short-cut to commercial affluence is 'perhaps the most novel feature of the Sinn Féin programme.' It is perhaps not the most valuable. A theory of strict abstention from representation in the Imperial Parliament is a leading feature of Sinn Féin. Sinn Féin, I should observe, is the Gaelic expression for 'Our own selves'—a somewhat unlovely subject of inspiration—and is intended to rivet the attention of Sinn Féiners on Ireland and Irish interests as the sole object of their concern at all times. It is, in fact, a selfish-sounding and undignified equivalent for patriotism or nationalism, and can accordingly be described as novel in appearance and antiquated in fact. The young men who are bound in the movement call themselves Sinn Féiners instead of Nationalists. That is all.

Behind and beneath the empty frivolities of the first



theorists of the movement there remains the fact that large numbers of Irishmen and Irishwomen, mostly belonging to the younger generation, are taking a pride in Irish nationality and language, and are devoting themselves to a propaganda on behalf of the cultivation of Irish industry and the improvement of Irish agriculture, which, however they may turn out, produce a delightful sense of honesty that has been long disassociated from parliamentary politics. There may be nothing new in Sinn Féin beyond its name, which is neither lofty nor lovely, but the reality of a great reaction on behalf of higher and purer ideals of national life and national pride cannot be overlooked by any intelligent observer. There is a truer manliness and womanliness about the young adherents of Sinn Féin which, if no catastrophe occur to check the generous enterprise, must introduce a cleaner spirit and a purer air into Dublin society. In conjunction with the Gaelic League, Sinn Féin devotes itself to the encouragement of reading and the promotion of pastimes connected with the nationality of Ireland. No words can describe adequately the appalling barrenness and dullness which have fallen upon intelligence and amusement alike in the capital and throughout the provinces. Until the Gaelic League and Sinn Féin appeared, the monotonous brutality of the agrarian passions roused by the Land League, and the monotonous trickery of the parliamentary intrigues which followed the degradation of Home Rule, had spread throughout town and village an apparent incapacity for any higher form of human activity than cheering a politician or boycotting a neighbour. The emigration from Ireland has been immensely stimulated by the inexpressible aridity and stagnation of all Irish life. The nearest approach to a social gathering was the celebration of some semi-religious occasion. The local bookshop even had nothing better than a stock of 'penny dreadfuls' from London and mawkish productions of a tractarian kind. Of course, it may be difficult for the taste for higher and better recreation to flourish along with such hideous parodies of popular

education as are afforded by the ignorance-ridden primary schools and the money-making machines that are called secondary schools. The Gaelic League and the Sinn Féin movement may be unable to supply the want of the system of public education possessed by all the progressive nations of Europe, but the Gaelic League and the Sinn Féin movement are already spreading that deep and noble detestation of existing evils and their causes, which may well change the social and intellectual atmosphere of rural Ireland itself. It has to be deplored, indeed, that some of the most prominent Sinn Féiners have shown themselves singularly unequal to the obligations of a movement which ought to appeal to all Irishmen who love their country. The absurd and offensive denunciation of Irish recruits for the military service must jar most offensively upon that immense class of Irish Conservatives whose contributions to the warlike glory of the Empire form the proudest element in the story of a thousand families. On the commonest grounds of mere matter of fact it should be needless to demonstrate the futility of urging a spirited young Irishman, who cannot find a civil trade to nourish him, on no account to accept a becoming uniform, a good bed and breakfast, and a shilling a day in his pocket as the price of volunteering to fight the enemies of Ireland's constitutional king. The ardent and oratorical Sinn Féiner, who appeals to Duffy and Murphy 'never to take the Saxon shilling,' might be seriously embarrassed if Duffy or Murphy asked him if he would contribute an Irish penny instead.

It may or may not be a good omen of their success that the Sinn Féiners are strong in the city of Dublin. It is a drawback to the affections of that fallen capital that it changes them with methodical velocity. Dublin prides itself upon its pellucid patriotism, and the knights of the Red Branch probably faded from history because they omitted to be inscribed upon the Roll of Freemen of the Dublin City Hall. A number of eminent Nationalists, notwithstanding, have expressed singularly depreciatory opinions upon Dublin from the Nationalist point of view. Even



Wolfe Tone has written in his diary that 'a corporal's guard would drive the mob of Dublin,' and ill-fated Emmet found that mob quite as worthless supporters as Wolfe Tone opined. When John Mitchell, the rebel editor of 1848, was carried away into transportation without the thousands of Dublin patriots lifting a finger, he spake thuswise: 'Adieu, Dublin! Adieu, city of bellowing slaves and genteel villas!' Dublin is the city of facile admiration and ineffective fidelities. The whole of the Nationalist glory of Dublin—by descent it is only an Anglo-Danish emporium—comes from the Irish Protestant Parliament and the monuments of their hands, the palace of the Legislature and the deserted Customs House. But for a generation the Dublin corporation has meanly excluded every Irish Conservative from its civic chair! The Lord Mayor's salary of £3000 a year is reserved for occupation by seniority confined to the one side of the Chamber alone. Nor is the boycott unknown to Sinn Féin policy. Alas! The more Dublin changes, the more it is the same as before.

There appears to be no manner of doubt that, so long as the present election law remains unaltered as regards the expenses of elections and the expenses of the trial of petitions, the Parliamentary party, supported by parochial collections in Ireland and by diminished but substantial supplies of the dollars from America, may continue to defy the opposition of private purses. The present election law was made by a rich country for a rich country. Rich candidates are fairly numerous in England. Not so in Ireland, and a wealthy organisation can start men of straw in three-fourths of the constituencies, can pay their expenses, and can defy the limited resources of private persons even to enter the field. There were hardly any contests for thirty years in Irish elections. The knowledge that the parochial collections of all Ireland and the dollars of all America will pay for the straw candidate, but that the private man must pay out of his own pocket, effectually damps opposition. 'The League candidate returned with-



out personal expense leaves no chance to the independent candidate who has to stand the racket.' There is the situation in a nutshell. There has not been a free general election in Ireland since thirty years—since Parnell in 1880 brought the first American money to swamp the Irish constituencies and to crush his Home Rule comrades—and there never will be a free election until the independent candidate is placed on a fair equality with the subsidised candidate by all election expenses being absolutely prohibited except the expenses paid by the State. The clever provision which rich England made in order to secure rich candidates has become in Ireland a provision by which the candidate subsidised by America and the sacristies obtains a monopoly of what is politely called the representation of the people. And there is this additional barrier against independent elections. If an independent candidate is cheated out of his right by open corruption and intimidation, the State will not even inquire into a crime against the Corrupt Practices Acts unless the State has previously received £1000 from the wronged and cheated candidate.

The electoral and financial organisation of the Irish Parliamentary and post-Parnellite party at the present moment deserves to be known. As for the electoral organisation, like the electoral organisations of the preceding leagues, of which it is the unlawful heir, the Irish Parliamentary party in combination with the United Irish League forms, constitutes, and operates a corporate corrupt practice for the purpose of substituting its clubs and committees for the electors and constituencies supposed to be established by law. The whole organisation is intended to deprive the citizens of Ireland of the free exercise of the franchise. To begin at the top. We have the national directory, which consists of the League members of Parliament, together with a number of delegates from the provinces duly chosen by the local League authorities under the supervision of the central office. Under the national directory come the local branches, spread throughout Ireland so as to cover every inch of ground in the constituencies. That is the

normal organisation. On the occurrence of an election, whether particular or general, the branches within the constituency send delegates to an electoral convention for the constituency, both the qualification of the branches and the qualification of the delegates being subject to the supreme decision of the directory at Dublin. In this way, if there be a revolt in any branch or branches, or any serious dissatisfaction, or any doubt about the reliability of a delegate, the central directory can quash the branch and quash the delegate, for a sufficient period at least to keep such causes of suspected dissension out of the electoral convention. All priests who support the League are entitled to attend at the electoral convention with the same powers as ordinary delegates, and with the additional power that, as presidents and leaders of the local branches, they have also arranged the composition of the delegate attendance. When the electoral convention for a constituency has met, though consisting of only a couple of hundred persons out of perhaps five thousand electors, the decision of the majority of these two hundred persons is assumed to represent the constituency; and the assumption is converted into formidable and irresistible facts by the simple arrangement that the candidate selected by the convention will be subsidised and supported with the pay-chest of the League, and with all the powers, constitutional and extra-constitutional, of the lay and clerical members of the convention, confirmed and corroborated by the central directory. To ensure the most mechanical unity, a member of the Parliamentary party, in case of a particular election, attends the electoral convention; and in case of a general election, representatives of the ex-members of Parliament as they are now, attend to a similar effect all the electoral conventions of the country. In this way, though theoretically a member of Parliament returns his mandate to his constituents on the dissolution of Parliament, the members of the Irish Parliamentary party never return their mandates, but continue to dominate the election after the dissolution as before it. In these simple and summary proceedings the mass of



the electorate, though it is some three-quarters of a million of persons supposed to be citizens, is entirely and absolutely ignored. There are no public meetings previous to the convention to send representatives of the electors to the convention. There are nothing but representatives of the League clubs and branches, supervised by the League directory, and with the League pay-chest and the League boycott in the background to enforce compliance.

The financial organisation of the League is divided into two parts. The first part is the home collection, and the second part is the American, and sometimes Australian, collection. The home collection is under the supreme control of a trio of trustees, two being the chairman of the Parliamentary party, Mr. Redmond, and the chairman of the Roscommon county council, the extreme agrarian, Mr. Fitzgibbon, who represent respectively the Parliamentarians and the Leaguers. The third trustee, who transcends his colleagues in every quality of influence and power, is Bishop Patrick O'Donnell of Raphoe, the leading member of the Congested Districts Board, which controls the western half of Ireland with its immense resources of State authority and State money, and venerated patron of the secret organisation of the Ancient Order of Hibernians in alliance with the Parliamentary party, of which Mr. J. Devlin is the national president, ruling in conjunction with the famous Board of Erin. Bishop O'Donnell of Raphoe is decidedly the ablest political churchman who has appeared on the platform of extreme Radicalism and Agrarianism in Ireland. It is no exaggeration of his direct power to say, that his nod can make twenty members of Parliament and can influence the chances of twenty others. His manifesto a couple of years ago to the Irish electors, 'to join the toiling masses against the classes,' might be said to have outlined and predetermined the existing alliance of English and Irish democrats. There can be no denial of the practical ability of the prelate of Raphoe, and no financial trustee more influential could protect the pecuniary interests of the Parliamentary party.



Under him work the collecting branches and committees of the League under their reverend presidents and patrons. A few examples, culled at random from a recent issue of the *Freeman's Journal*, will illustrate the action and the influence of the reverend clergy in filling the pay-chest of the Parliamentary party of the League.

	£	s.	d.
Priests and People, Kilrush (Clare) U.I.L., per Rev. P. J. Scanlon, P. Burke, D.C. ; M. Crotty, U.C. ; P. Murgovan, and T. Nagle . . . . .	20	0	0
Priests and People, Killygarvan and Tullyfern (Donegal), including £1 from Rev. J. J. Canon Gallagher, P.P., and 10s. each from Rev. J. Sweeney, C.C., and Rev. A. Logue, C.C., per Very Rev. J. J. Canon Gallagher, P.P. . . . .	14	11	3
Priests and People, Latton (Monaghan), per Rev. H. McMeel, P.P. . . . .	5	6	3
Castlelyons (Cork) U.I.L., per Very Rev. Canon O'Leary, P.P. ; A. Meade, and Jerh. Toomey . . . . .	10	9	6
Priests and People, Broomfield, Lisdoonan, and Donaghmoyne (Monaghan), per Very Rev. Canon O'Connor, P.P. . . . .	18	1	5
Priests and People, Castleconnor (Sligo), per Rev. E. Timlin, P.P., whose £1 is included . . . . .	11	17	6
Ardfinan, Grange, and Ballybacon (Tipperary) U.I.L., per Very Rev. W. Canon Sheehy, D.D., P.P. . . . .	9	0	0

Here we have £90 contributed by the priests on behalf of seven parishes or districts for the sustentation of the pay-chest. Yet there are innocent and unsophisticated politicians, like Mr. Birrell, who conclude that when the graduate members of convocation of the new National University were excluded from the university governing body, the silence of the Parliamentarians from Ireland showed that the laity rather liked to be nobodies in their own university. A glance at the source from which the Parliamentarians pay their weekly bills will have indicated that it might not be safe to quarrel with the paymasters.

In the same issue of the League journal, the parliamentary

fund is enriched with a list of subscriptions contributed by the bishop and clergy of Achonry, as the result of a collection among themselves :—

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	£	s.	d.
Most Rev. Dr. Lyster, Bishop of Achonry . . .	5	0	0
Right Rev. Monsignor Staunton, P.P., Swinford . .	1	0	0
Ven. Archdeacon O'Hara, P.P., Kilmovee . . .	2	0	0
Rev. D. O'Hara, P.P., Kiltimagh . . . . .	2	0	0
Rev. M. Keveney, P.P., Charlestown . . . . .	2	0	0
Rev. J. O'Grady, P.P., Bohola . . . . .	1	0	0
Rev. P. Hunt, P.P., Straide . . . . .	1	0	0
Rev. M. Henry, P.P., Foxford . . . . .	1	0	0
Rev. W. Henry, P.P., Attymas . . . . .	1	0	0
Rev. A. Callaghan, P.P., Bonniconlan . . . . .	1	0	0
Rev. J. McDonnell, P.P., Killasser . . . . .	1	0	0
Rev. P. J. Mulligan, Adm., Carracastle . . . . .	1	0	0
Rev. J. Gallagher, Adm., Ballaghadereen . . . .	1	0	0
Rev. J. Durcan, C.C., Ballaghadereen . . . . .	1	0	0
Rev. M. J. Devine, C.C., Foxford . . . . .	1	0	0
Rev. P. J. Cawley, C.C., Swinford . . . . .	0	10	0
Rev. W. Flynn, C.C., Kilmovee . . . . .	0	10	0
Rev. J. Spelman, C.C., Swinford . . . . .	0	10	0
Rev. P. Boland, C.C., Swinford . . . . .	0	10	0
Rev. H. Dillon, C.C., Charlestown . . . . .	0	10	0
Rev. C. Gildea, C.C., Kiltimagh . . . . .	0	10	0
Rev. P. Higgins, C.C., Bohola . . . . .	0	10	0
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	£25	10	0
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This is distinctly a gratifying alteration from the days of the dynamite dollars, when Pat Ford alternated remittances to the Parnellites with recruiting appeals for ' brave Irishmen ' to set London on fire ' in fifty places some windy night.' There can simply be no comparison between a fund subscribed by earnest and devout clergymen, whether or not we relish their ideals of civic freedom, and a product of the collections of the *Irish World*. But the source of this fund ensures, as the clergy know right well, there never will be a union of Protestant with Catholic Irishmen to support

a Home Rule movement subsidised by Maynooth. So the venerable clergy are able to enjoy the double delight of a dependent parliamentary representation and a permanent division of Ireland warranted to make Home Rule quite hopeless and impossible. This is good business every way.

With regard to the transoceanic department of the financial system of the League, the recent tour of Mr. T. P. O'Connor, following on the tracks of so many preceding tours, is sufficient illustration of this part of the business. There are three requisites for a successful tour of this description in America, which may be summarily stated as follows :—

1. A good platform orator.
2. Some British institution to annihilate.
3. The solemn assurance that Home Rule is in sight, and that the performance is just about to begin.

I need not say that Mr. T. P. O'Connor is a platform orator of the best : rotund, indignant, persuasive, denunciatory, encouraging. As for the British institution to be destroyed, we know that now it is the House of Lords. Mr. T. P. O'Connor was able to assure American audiences that the House of Lords concentrated in itself the worst venom of the British Empire, that its abolition meant untold benefit to the world in general and to Ireland in particular, and that every man who had a grudge against the British Empire was consequently bound to annihilate the House of Lords. These engaging themes were illustrated by Mr. O'Connor with a profuse variety of his most characteristic eloquence. The third prerequisite, that Home Rule was in sight, followed naturally from the abolition of the only obstacle ; and it is to be presumed that the generous Americans accepted this time the assurance that what they saw was land, and not a cloud upon the horizon. To my certain knowledge, Home Rule has been in sight of the audiences which filled the collecting hats any day of the year for the past thirty years ; and the end is not yet. I think that the circumstance shows at least that the alleged



excess of business spirit, which threatens to destroy the poetry of the American nation, has not down to the present entirely occupied the verdant regions of Hibernian brotherhood. But though the general outline of the proceeding has been observed with monotonous fidelity by Mr. T. P. O'Connor as by his predecessors, there is this vast difference abroad as at home. At home it is Bishop O'Donnell instead of Mr. Patrick Egan who guards the treasure of the patriots, and in America it is the most pacific and churchgoing element of the ex-Irish, who, sometimes headed by their archbishops and bishops, form the reception committees and fill the bag for the Parliamentary envoy of the Parliamentary party. Mr. T. P. O'Connor, of course, did not openly and violently amputate his dynamite tail of the days of yore. He continued to speak in heartrending tones of the debt of vengeance which was so long due. He made judicious use of fiery souvenirs, but I am not aware that even Mr. John Devoy, that comparatively moderate extremist, appeared upon his platforms, or that the Clann-na-Gael admitted him to the honours of its encampments and reviews. In fact, I have the best information, on the contrary, that Mr. John Devoy devoted to Mr. T. P. O'Connor's mission all the resources of a vigorous invective, describing the Parliamentarians as the 'bought hacks of the Liberal treasury,' and distinctly declining to except Mr. T. P. O'Connor himself from the willing victims of Anglo-Saxon seduction.

When I referred to the most reverend trustee of the parliamentary fund as an influential patron of the Board of Erin Hibernians, I intended to notice an aggravation of the Parliamentary situation in Ireland, from the point of view of constitutional liberty and right, to which I now direct a couple of observations. This aggravation is nothing less than the intervention of the Secret Sectarian Society of the Board of Erin Ribbonmen as part and instrument of the general scheme for monopolising the Irish constituencies. The Board of Erin is the picturesque designation for the ruling Lodge of the Hibernian Order in

Ireland, an association confined to Catholics, bound to secrecy, and bound to serve the Church in a number of ways which are hidden by the veil of mystery. The Ribbon Order has been the parent of atrocious occurrences, but it has also historical associations of a moving character. There are substantial reasons for regarding it as descended from the hosts of semi-outlawed Catholics in the eighteenth century and the broken remnants of the Jacobite and Confederate armies against Orange and Puritan in the century before. They were the men of Count O'Hanlon. They were the men of Galloping O'Hogan. They had chased the English planters to the cry of God, and Our Lady, and Rury O'Moore. For many a day they formed the escort and the avengers of landless Irish gentlemen, who saw the Cromwellian and the Palatine in their ancestral homes. As a poet of Young Ireland wrote :—

The Masther's Bawn, the Masther's Seat, a surly bodagh fills ;  
 The Masther's son, an outlawed man, is ridin' on the hills ;  
 But God be thanked that round him throng, as thick as  
     summer bees,  
 The swords that held Proud Limerick long, his lovin' Rapparees.

But why revive in the twentieth century the hatreds and the organisations of centuries ago? Mr. William O'Brien, M.P., has openly declared that the Ribbon Lodge now dominates the Parliamentary party. Contingents, muscular and unhesitating, of the sworn brothers attend conventions and canvass constituencies. Previously unknown, the ' Mollies,' the ' Molly Maguires,' have appeared in force in Dublin. They have been called the ' Priests' Fenians,' because they supply a denominational counterpart to the unsectarian patriotism of the militant Nationalists. They are affiliated to episcopal authority. They are organised with chaplains, and grand chaplains, and national chaplains. Their participation in Irish politics certainly increases the gulf between Protestant and Catholic. But, if Home Rule is not wanted to succeed, this is rather a recommendation. The following editorial, which appeared in the *Freeman's*

*Journal* of December 18, 1909, commemorates the fact that the national trustee of the Hibernian Order is a foremost clergyman of the diocese of Raphoe, and that the Board of Erin Ribbonmen had presented him with a valuable testimonial on his receiving ecclesiastical promotion from Bishop Patrick O'Donnell, the leading member of the Congested Districts Board, which controls half of Ireland.

A striking compliment was paid by the members of the *Board of Erin of the Ancient Order of Hibernians* to the Rev. J. C. Cannon, on the occasion of his promotion from the Administration of Letterkenny to the charge of the parish of Glencolumbkille. The handsome and appropriate presents from the National Board of the organisation and the County Dublin Board must be valued by the recipient; but he will appreciate still more the generous feeling that inspired the presentation, and the esteem and confidence betokened by the gifts. Irish Nationalists everywhere must associate themselves heartily with this tribute to a consistent, earnest, and courageous worker in the national movement. Mr. Joseph Devlin, M.P., acknowledged, in a felicitous speech, *Father Cannon's great services to the Order*. 'The connexion of such a man with their Order,' he said, 'was a tribute to its worth that could not be overestimated.' In this sentence is condensed the sentiment that animated the proceedings last night. *Father Cannon has been honoured by his Bishop, and the organisation of which he is National Trustee* honoured itself by signifying its pleasure at his promotion.

In the address read by the national president of the Board of Erin Hibernians, Mr. Devlin, M.P., a couple of sentences will sufficiently indicate the position and the influence of this national trustee of the Ribbon Order.

You have left behind you in Letterkenny the happiest memories of your administration. You have been a true pastor to the people, and the *trusted friend and confidant of your great and beloved Bishop* (applause). . . . You have been firm and loyal in times of doubt and difficulty, wise and prudent in council, courageous and bold in action (applause). But it is as a member of the Board of Erin, and as our National Trustee, that we specially desire to congratulate you.



The address is signed as follows by the highest officials of the order, who speak to this Catholic priest 'fraternally' as an affiliated brother :—

We remain, dear Father Cannon, with every good wish, yours fraternally,

Joseph Devlin, National President ; James Stafford, National Vice-President ; John D. Nugent, P.L.G., National Secretary ; Jas. Blewitt, M.D., J.P., National Treasurer ; Daniel O'Donnell (Ald.), National Trustee ; Peter McCann, National Trustee ; Peter Reilly, U.D.C., National Trustee.

Frankly speaking, as a Catholic and Irishman, I do not think this right from any point of view. A priest of Christ ought not to own any 'fraternity' but the brotherhood of Christians. He ought not to be under obligations to any member of the flock more than to others. A bishop who favours affiliates of a secret order can hardly be the common pastor of all his charge. The division of Irishmen between plain and open citizens and, on the other side, affiliated brothers of a secret association is not right. The introduction of such a form of organised and secret force into parliamentary representation and election is not right.<sup>1</sup> What future, we are entitled to ask, are the clergy preparing for the country by underground militias of secret brethren of this description ? Is this, indeed, United Ireland, or

<sup>1</sup> The new "extension of the Ribbon or Hibernian Society or Order, which is occurring under such influential auspices, deserves to recall some serious statements by leading Irish representatives at a distance of many years from each other.

Mr. William O'Brien, only three years ago, wrote in these terms of the grip which Ribbonism was taking of the Parliamentary party. So late as June 22, 1907, Mr. O'Brien published this declaration : 'The sinister part played by the Ancient Order of Hibernians overshadows all other questions in importance. There is no check upon its operations. Its affairs are conducted in secrecy and darkness.'

Mr. A. M. Sullivan, the distinguished Home Ruler of an earlier era, wrote of the same organisation in his *New Ireland* : 'Vain is all pretence that the Ribbon Society did not become a hideous organisation of outrage and murder.'

But the patrons, the open and avowed patrons, of the Ribbon Secret Order are also the chief agents in disposing of immense subsidies of Government money throughout the half of Ireland, have vast powers of compulsory expropriation. Who can unravel the puzzle of the relations between government and anti-government in Ireland ?

if unity is to be enforced on this basis, what is to become of the Irishmen who are outside of the lodges and the affiliation, the signs and the passwords of the Board of Erin? The British Government has driven unity out of the university. Is unity to be penalised also in the citizen body and the electoral privilege? Such things have had a certain success in other countries. But there have been woful vicissitudes. It seems to me that something vastly worse than a divorce-court scandal has come to roost in Ireland. Let us grant that the Ribbon Order had its day and its excuse in fierce times of mutual hate. Why extend it, with all the weight and influence of priestly and episcopal recommendation, over the country and among fellow-countrymen to-day?

### III.—THE IRISH IN AMERICA

While the vision of a co-operation of all Irishmen without distinction of race or creed is apparently ending in what I have just essayed to describe, and while the old palladia of constitutional tradition and the most ancient institutions of society in England are the target or the stakes of a competition which curiously resembles familiar phases of Irish agitations, there remains, in intimate connexion with this history and this survey, to consider the condition and development of the vast communities of Irish blood which have spread beyond the Atlantic, and which have been associated with so many appeals for assistance of sorts since Parnell first crossed the water to New York to reap the harvest sown by Davitt and Devoy, and to substitute a foreign dictation of ignorance and passion for the deliberate judgment of Ireland itself. A good deal of water has come down the Shannon since then, and a good deal more down the Mississippi. I have not hesitated to intimate my conviction, that the interference of ex-Irish Americans in Irish affairs during the past thirty years has been the very worst calamity of all the calamities which have afflicted the Irish homeland in that period. The Americanised

Parliamentary party, which supplanted, by bribes and calumny, the Home Rule party, was begotten of that interference and has not ceased to be sustained by American generosity, though not always by the same generosity. I have no doubt that we should have had federal self-government in combination with Imperial government to-day but for the undutiful incursion of all that alien money, which encouraged and rewarded bad comrades and unscrupulous adventurers to destroy the hopes of Irish union and to revolt the primary instincts of civilisation. Without federal and national government the Empire cannot hope to exist, and no application of federalism which ignores the fundamental characteristics of Isaac Butt's Home Rule will be worth the fashion of a season.

I have drawn attention to the change in the American outlook, which is summarised in the incident of the collecting agent of contemporary parliamentarianism being heartily denounced and abominated by the same John Devoy who delivered the deplorable gospel of the New Departure to the deserters from Isaac Butt. While Archbishops of Boston and Baltimore invited the contributions of the devout auditory round Mr. T. P. O'Connor to speed the work of the United Irish League and the Board of Erin, all the hottest wrath of the Clann-na-Gael was being poured upon the whole Parliamentary party and its collecting agent in the columns of the *Gaelic American* in the more than candid prose of its editor. It must be remembered to the credit of Mr. Devoy, that he, like Mr. John O'Leary, Dr. Carroll, and other leaders of the militant or National Fenians, began to separate from the Land League in proportion as it revealed its mission of merely social subversion instead of any form of national progress or restoration. The difference between National Fenianism and Ribbon Fenianism, between the men who dreamed of the sword, or even of the torpedo, and the caitiffs who mutilated cattle and fired shots into dwellings, asserted itself as soon almost as the first batch of Parnellite ex-Fenians volunteered to swear an oath of allegiance, with their tongues in their cheeks, at the table



of the House of Commons. It was then that proud old John O'Leary wished the British sovereign joy of the British oaths of turncoats who had already taken and broken the rebel vow ! It is the superficial custom of London political critics to admit no distinction between Kosciusko and a thug when Kosciusko happens to be Irish. This superficiality has at least one drawback. It vitiates the criticism still more than it insults the Irishman.

At the very outset of the observations which I have to make on the relations between the Americans of Irish descent and the Irish Parliamentarians, let me briefly state that Englishmen have simply no conception of the vast and enlarging importance of the ex-Irish section of the population of the United States—importance in numbers, in position, in influence upon the destinies of the Republic and the direction of the Republic's development and ambitions. I shall return to this matter. The influence of the Irish-American population upon Ireland and Irish parliamentarianism is a different consideration. I am convinced that the Irish-American influence has been wholly bad, wholly injurious ; so bad and so injurious as to deserve to be called calamitous and ruinous. I do not except the economic and industrial field from the scope of this judgment. In the economic and industrial field, above all, Irish America has sucked the homeland to the bone, has bled the homeland white ; and the worst misgovernment of England for fifty years has not produced the tenth part of the pauperisation, demoralisation, and depopulation, which we owe to our kin beyond the seas, their new country, and their incorrigible ignorance of the wants of Ireland.

I have not hesitated at an early page of these volumes to state my conviction, that the Black Famine would never have become a famine if the Irish population of the time had vindicated the primordial rights of human society, had seized the food for wife and children which was leaving the land for selfish commerce, and risked the unlikely loss of a hundred thousand desperate lives at musket muzzle and push of pike, in order to prevent the rotting sheep's death

which fell upon millions. England's hideous misgovernment and mismanagement were merely colossal incapacity. The rising of the millions to find food for their little ones would never have provoked a military massacre. Even that were better a thousand times than what happened. If there had been no America to fly to, courage and duty might, even after forty years of O'Connellism, have rescued the miserable race. The mirage of America filled the emigrant ships and filled the famine graves. The first emigrants invited imitative myriads. The impulse of flight, the lust of expatriation, once communicated, has endured. Instead of rising in their millions to the cry, 'Seize the corn,' two millions lay down to rot and die, while two millions took some sort of passage tickets to America. The clergy, avid of supernatural virtues, preached variations on the O'Connellite maxim: 'All human liberty is not worth one drop of human blood'! That Bishop of Derry, Dr. Maginn, who had offered to join an insurrection 'along with twenty officers in black uniforms,' found no insurrection and no ecclesiastical comrades. The Irish priests were not priests of Tyrol or Saragossa. They were apostles of resignation unto death! Lord Palmerston thanked them by informing the Pope that most people in good society in London were convinced that the way to civilise Ireland was by 'hanging or transporting the parish clergy.'

There never was such a flitting of a miserable folk. I have spoken to scores of Irishmen and Irishwomen who had lived through that journey in the foul emigrant ships of the period. Joseph Ronayne, M.P. for Cork, and John Francis Maguire, M.P. for Dungarvan, gave me quires of depositions by sufferers and victims. The fugitives were packed like sardines in fetid steerages. Starvation and sickness held them prostrate. Brutal and immoral crews dominated them. Hundreds of pure Irish girls, faint and helpless in their desolate condition, were outraged by brutish ruffians. Much was done by the best part of the American public to lessen the wretchedness of the incoming multitudes. Uprooted from their agricultural occupations, without a

cent to secure the rural homesteads of the Republic, the famishing men and women took any kind, and necessarily the coarsest kind, of labour for daily bread. Vast numbers of the immigrants knew nothing or little of the English language. There were not even priests who could speak Gaelic to these displanted Irish, and the refugees lost their remnant of Catholic religion by hundreds of thousands. Not for thirty-four years after the famine, not till the marble cathedral of St. Patrick had risen on Fifth Avenue, was there any Catholic organisation to meet and counsel the innocent women and girls who stepped upon strange cosmopolitan quays infested with every species of human shark and reptile. The Irish had received no education in Ireland. Generations must pass before they could get much benefit from education in America. Never was such an unshepherded flock, never was such an unchieftained and leaderless race, cast upon a foreign shore, unfriended and resourceless. When an Irish visitor lands to-day at New York or Boston, when he mingles even a little in the commercial and industrial life, in the speculation and the culture of contemporary America, he is at first astounded and incredulous at the universal evidence of the numbers, the power, the wealth, the enterprise of the Irish-descended citizens. Seldom in the history of mankind have the innate pith, and courage, and genius of a race that held in honour the sword and the spade, achieved—at what an awful price!—a more marvellous victory. It has been said to-day that over 40,000,000 white inhabitants of the United States have a share of Irish blood from one parent or the other. From Presidents of the Republic to Presidents of Trusts, and from the pioneer founders of new states and territories to the gigantic policemen of eastern cities and the mighty athletes of Olympian competitions, where will you not find Irish-Americans? If the descendants of the Irish exiles had tried to do one thousandth part for the ancient homeland that they have done for the country of their adoption and increase, this book could not be written; and a great, flourishing, and manly nation in Ireland would be continuing and bettering



the lesson of the Legislature and the University in College Green. It came to pass, however—and in the circumstances nothing else could happen—that the enormous majority of Americans of Irish descent have hardly ever thought of Ireland except as a place from which they should bring their remaining relatives—that is, the able-bodied and healthy of them—across the water to contribute the qualities of their magnificent strain of blood to the continued advance of the United States. The higher the Irish Americans climb the more invisible to them and their prosperous offspring become the fair hills of Holy Ireland.<sup>1</sup> But let no English optimist imagine that this circumstance improves the prospect for the external interests of England. There are no fiercer and more resolute Pan-Americans than the grandsons who only remember that an Island which they quite despise was bitterly wronged by a fiend called Cromwell. Which is a frame of mind that impresses me not at all; pursuing only the honour of my own country, and taking no interest and finding no compensation in mere hate against England.

A sort of stupefaction is likely to be experienced by

<sup>1</sup> An instructive book on 'The Irish in America,' forming part of a series of works on Irish subjects—London: John Ouseley, Limited—contains frank admissions upon the total oblivion of Ireland prevalent among the most successful Americans of Irish descent:—

'While a considerable percentage of Irish-Americans and their descendants will always look back to Ireland with national pride and a steadfast affection, it is betraying no secret to say that many of the descendants of the early pioneers show a disposition to regard Ireland as merely an historical atom in the composition of the American Republic. The political history of Ireland appeals to them but very little. They are not troubled about her internal disaffection or her differences with the English Government. The perpetual quarrels of landlord and tenant are too insular to occupy minds that are required to study problems of great international importance. The interests of the American Republic first, second, and all the time, are to them an all-absorbing consideration. In a word they are American first, and anything else a long time after.

'Wealth and social environment have as much effect in developing political ideas and moulding national character in America as they have in England or any other European country, and it cannot therefore be very surprising that we find thousands of prominent men and women in the United States with distinctively Irish names ready to repudiate any connexion with Ireland, and possessing no knowledge whatever of the country, its history, or the characteristics of its people, beyond the mere fact that it is a little island of which much is heard but little known. They regard themselves as native Americans, and have no time to examine or study branches of genealogical trees.'

the dispassionate observer, who learns for the first time how the Americanised Irish and their descendants interfered to destroy the Home Rule party just freely chosen by the free ballot of a majority of the constituencies of Ireland, and to reject and repudiate the deliberations of Home Rule conferences, summoned on the requisition of 24,000 of the leading citizens of all classes of the country, and attended by all the most uncontested leaders of national and popular parties without distinction or exclusion. From Mr. G. C. Doran, the most influential Nationalist in Munster, to Mr. O'Connor Don, the head of the Catholic aristocracy, from honest John Martin, the free Presbyterian, to Trinity dons and Maynooth divines, the flower of Ireland had acclaimed the gifted, the learned, the eloquent, the genial and statesmanlike Isaac Butt. And a mixed multitude of emigrant Irishmen, who professed reverent obedience to the Irish homeland, presumed to reject this leadership, and, with the help of money and crime, caused it to be rejected! What was the interference of the British Government with Irish independence compared to this? The British Government did not profess to be yearning to express its devotion and obedience to the opinion of Ireland. When one perceives at what initiative, on whose counsel, this astounding piece of treachery combined with impertinence was performed, the wonder does not diminish. Mr. John Devoy a dozen years before had been sentenced to penal servitude because, being a private soldier, he had brought other private soldiers to join a conspiracy against the sovereign to whom he had taken the military oath. Since his amnesty he had been engaged on the *New York Herald*. I am not concerned about his personal worth or ability. Mr. Michael Davitt, the other ringleader of the anti-Home Rule confederacy, had ten years before been sentenced to penal servitude for selling revolvers for treasonable purposes among workmen in England. He had been a millworker in England. The assemblies of ex-Irishmen which they addressed in America had never done anything for Ireland except live out of it, with the fixed purpose of never returning



to it. Such were the qualifications and the title-deeds of the assailants of the policy to be thrust and forced on the leaders and leading classes of the Irish homeland. It was from these constituent authorities that Mr. Charles Stewart Parnell took his mission to attack his comrades and drive them from public life, to displace his generous leader who had brought him into politics, to break up the movement for the conciliation of classes and interests in Ireland, to proclaim the devil's code of the boycott against men, women, and even children, to wink at outrage, to be silent at outrage, to support the propaganda of outrage, and finally to enter into a corrupt bargain with a wilful and manœuvring premier of England for accepting a ridiculous and unworkable travesty of the Home Rule of Isaac Butt. And what were the means? The means were identically the same for thrusting the Home Rule conference from its national supremacy as for purchasing the surgical knives which sliced and stabbed the victims of the Phoenix Park. The cheques of the Land League treasury, the dollars of dynamite fools and suborners of assassins—'household words in Ireland'—at New York and Chicago. If Irish unity is now in ruin, if the Molly Maguires have replaced the Invincibles, if there is not an Irish public man with the statesmanship of a bull calf or the independence of a whipped spaniel, the source of every curse and calamity for thirty years has been the ignorant and impertinent interference of the ex-Irish in America.

It is not very difficult to comprehend the reason of that extraordinary manifestation of arrogance and incapacity. It is not merely that entire incompetence rushes in where trained intelligence fears to tread. We have to represent to ourselves that those ex-Irish dictators to Ireland were, above all, typical American citizens with a double dose of the self-confidence, the admiration of American institutions, and the ignorance of every other kind of institution, the enthusiasm for misunderstood American history and precedents, and the contempt for totally unknown history everywhere else, which have amiably characterised



not a few of the countrymen of Mr. Jefferson Brick. Neither let us scorn these curious characteristics. We know not yet what magnificent glories, nor what world-shaking tragedies and catastrophes, may await the gigantic development of that unlicked cubhood. It seemed perfectly natural and conventional to those citizens from the eastern, the middle, and the western states to hold a meeting of citizens, to propose a constitution in a couple of resolutions, to vote a supply of dollars to the vigilance committees instructed to realise the wishes of the camp or the caucus. They would proceed in that style down Kansas way, or to found the virgin statehood of Oklahoma. Of an historic nationality, of an inherited society and culture, of the interplay of traditions through generations, they knew nothing and wanted to know nothing. If Ireland was not even as a prairie territory, that showed that Ireland had departed from the normal origins of properly organised communities; and she had better be sunk to that level anyhow. There were a dozen ward managers on the Bowery who could set up a properly fixed Ireland just as slick as slick.

If a man were assailed and wounded in the street, he would have much less reason to thank the voluble citizens who expended their sympathy on cursing the offenders than one quiet stranger who produced medicated lint and sticking plaster. I think we may dismiss the wealthy Irish citizens of the United States as being quite as hopelessly worthless for Irish purposes as if they were called Schmidt or Jensen instead of Kelly and Burke and Shea. The Society of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick may continue to make an infusion of Irish descent obligatory as a condition of membership of their wealthy and gastronomic company. They may continue to applaud the rebel song: 'Who fears to speak of 'Ninety-eight?' Nobody imagines that any such fear agitates, or needs to agitate, their pacific banquet. They are welcome to carve the British Lion with their knife and fork. They will probably prefer terrapin and turkey. The whole legend of Irish-American sympathy, once past

the Fenian crisis which succeeded the Civil War, is pure picturesque. Unfortunately, in the form of Land League dollars and dictation, it has destroyed more peace, patriotism, and prosperity in Ireland than may ever be restored. I was led to view one of the proudest monuments of that sympathy which had been excited to the exaltation of the avengers of Erin. It was the Fenian submarine. It lay on the shore of Newhaven, in the property of the ex-centre of Galway Fenians who had lent me three hundred of his enlisted patriots to form an audience on an evening of my oratorical youth. It was a real submarine, perhaps the earliest in existence, made by Holland, the famous inventor of engines of the kind. Like the similar *Goubet* in France, it was small, about eight feet in diameter by twenty-five feet in length. It may have been warranted in its prime to reach the middle of Long Island Sound without sinking. It constituted the Irish-American navy which was to convoy the armada of the Friendly Sons to the reconquest of Ireland. Small and rusty, revered and useless, it was for years the theme of proud anticipations. The hat went round in its name to stimulate to immortal deeds and modest subscriptions. It symbolises not inappropriately the net value of Irish-American sympathy in the regeneration of Ireland. Apart from the poor Irish immigrants—whose Brian of Borua was Captain Moonlight—that sympathy was always strictly parsimonious. I saw the names of dozens of men, who attended Mr. T. P. O'Connor's recent performances for the collection of parliamentary subsidies, and who could have each given without the slightest inconvenience a cheque for double the total amount of the zealous collector's total results. They would do it for an American object which was likely to bring them credit as American citizens. Nor need we censure their thrifty altruism towards Ireland. Their memories of Ireland are memories of poverty and ruin. They come of a different class from the proud and splendid cavaliers who fought and bled for Ireland's honour through a hundred years of the Irish brigades of Sarsfield and Lally. They



find it quite natural to struggle after membership of the Four Hundreds and to cultivate oblivion of the poor Munster cabin and the desolate field. They can hate England, but they are proud of the United States and the Four Hundreds. Their Tara is South American annexation and East Asian protectorate.

I ought to apologise to Tammany if my references to that society were understood to echo the aspersions common on this side of the water, because Tammany is believed to be Irish American—which it is not—and specially common on the other side of the water at certain fixed periods when somebody or other has failed to make a satisfactory arrangement with the Wigwam, and is extremely virtuous in consequence. Tammany has a tough job, and if revolutions cannot usually be made with rosewater, neither can a greater Babylon in the bud, like New York the unparalleled, be exactly handled in the spirit of the little flowers of Saint Francis. Beautiful exceedingly, imperially vast, cultured to effeminacy, luxurious to profligacy, full of refinement, full of brutality; a queen of beneficence, a courtesan of prodigality; the home of the richest, the home of the most degraded; the coronal of American energy, the sink of American theft and speculation; kind, enchanting, hospitable; at the gate of the west, at the disembarkment wharves of Europe, Africa, and Asia; every evil exaggerated by a belief in liberty which necessitates exceptional repression; the united municipalities of London, Paris, Berlin, and St. Petersburg might feel themselves inferior to a responsibility which the Tammany-ridden municipality of that astounding city of worlds and world of a city manages to contain with means which seem to be adapted to the recurrent emergencies. I admit all that. But I think all the more that the importation of Tammany methods is decidedly not good for the liberties of Ireland. ‘Get your majority, and get it anyhow.’ ‘When you have your majority, use it for all it is worth.’ ‘To the victors the spoils.’ The seed of these precious commandments is found in all popular governments. The boss and the machine



have raised the nursling plant to a spreading upas-tree, and all the birds of foul appetite take shelter therein. I believe that Tammany is even comparatively moderate. But I did not like it in Ireland. I do not even like the corporation of Dublin never electing a Conservative Lord Mayor—though Conservatives pay rates and taxes—simply because the salary of the Dublin mayoralty is £3000 a year, and the majority want the spoils for their own sort.

I do not like the use that Tammany makes of Irish sentiment among the ignorant new voters. When some city election is running, it is appalling how much indignation is expended on Cromwell and Castlereagh. A man who can throw such fervour into his opinion about Queen Bess must be the ideal candidate for the vacant supervisorship of skyscrapers. Enormous is the wealth of the ex-Irish in America. Enormous is the ability and enormous the energy of the ex-Irish in America. I had the honour of sitting at a dinner with a couple of dozen guests, and more than one hundred million dollars were said to put their legs under the table; 'all Irish,' they genially boasted; and not one had ever done anything for Ireland, and not one ever would. You may search Ireland from end to end, and you will not find the traces of Irish-American munificence. The American dollars which swamped the poor electorate and poor elections of Ireland ran to half a million sterling in four or five years; but it was contributed by poor folk. It represented an infinitesimal contribution from each member of a population of many millions. One Irish lawyer has made double the amount in a few years by selling his knowledge of pre-existing concessions of valuable rights to new corporations. The prince merchants of Hellas throughout the world otherwise remember the land of the Greeks. The Scot who has made his pile in Hongkong or Buenos Ayres will end his days in a palatial mansion where he can look on bank and brae of bonnie Scotland, will endow a professorship, and present a park. The only contribution of the

Irish-American Midas to the embellishment or defence of Ireland is that sonorous but cheap oratory described by Americans as hot air. Unquestionably the source of this apparent grossness is in education. Irish education is in bad hands. The Irish American, like the Irish Irelander, is only lavish for self-indulgence in this world, and for his soul in the next. When he looks beyond the grave, he can be lavish, in America as in Ireland, in various forms of fire insurance. The Irish peasantry were said to be born gentlemen, but the successful Irishman is mostly a mean person.

Undoubtedly to the poorer Irishmen and, still more, Irishwomen of the earlier generations after the famine, the name of Ireland was sacred, and the name of England even as the nether pit. They had had immediate and incontrovertible proof of England's rule. The quarter-acre clause had driven their parents and kindred on the roadside. The horrors of the emigrant ship, while their streaming eyes turned to Ireland across the grey waves, would never leave their memory. It was at the close of the great Civil War that the Irish in America had wakened to a sense of power and a hope of vengeance. The regiments of Irish soldiers, bearing a green flag beside the stars and stripes, the glowing praise of press and government for their iron valour, the fame of Irish commanders, headed by fighting Phil Sheridan and Meagher of the Sword: all this roused the warrior blood and the exile's dream of retribution. As the Irish soldiery poured down Broadway and a score of other city highways on the ending of the war, they chanted to the rolling cheers: 'We're marching next to Ireland.' That was the cradle-song of the Fenian movement.<sup>1</sup> I do not

<sup>1</sup> An incident of the American Civil War, which vividly illustrates this subject, may be mentioned here.

The Federal and Confederate armies were facing one another, and only a river separated large bodies from one another. For the moment there was truce between the outposts, and the weary soldiers on both sides were resting under the evening sky. Suddenly from one side of the river rose T. D. Sullivan's famous song, 'Deep in Canadian woods we've met.' It swelled and rolled in gathering volume down one bank. It was taken up in mightier tone upon the other. Hundreds, thousands, of the opposing troops stood up singing the stirring words which go home to the Irish

care who knows it. I regard the Fenian movement as possessing every justification which right against wrong can have, except success. In the conventions which founded the Land League there were hundreds and hundreds of war-decorated veterans who had shared in the glad delirium of those days, when secretaries of state at Washington whispered meaningly to centres and chief centres about 'Canada settling for the *Alabama*,' and when General Sheridan was promised as the Fenian commander-in-chief. These men were the flower of the National Fenians. Comparatively few of them remained long in the Land League. They were the first to resent Parnell's acceptance of Gladstonised Home Rule, the supremacy of the English Parliament, the denial of trade taxation, the subordination of the Irish exchequer. When Parnell and Davitt asked the adoption of Irish America for that still-born mongrel, they were interrupted by indignant cries: 'After all their promises, have Parnell and Davitt come to declare that Ireland wants to cower under a corner of the Union Jack?' Mr. Parnell's pact with Mr. Gladstone had destroyed the basis of his power, long before the clergy let loose on him the moral and virtuous lieutenants, who could hear of fifty murders without twitching a muscle, but who faintly called for smelling-salts at the discovery of a seven-years-stale acquaintance with a married woman. By the treaty of Kilmainham, Parnell had sold his liberty to Gladstone, and Gladstone slipped inside him with the party as the *Rale* Irish leader. But neither Gladstone nor Gladstone's Home Rule touched the phalanx of the Fenian men. It heart. No shot could be fired while that verse rose on the evening air of the long bivouacs:

Deep in Canadian woods we've met,  
 From one bright island flown;  
 Great is the land we tread, but yet  
 Our hearts are with our own;  
 And ere we leave this shanty small,  
 While fades the parting day,  
 We'll toast Old Ireland, Dear Old Ireland,  
 Ireland, Boys, Hurray!

The blood of old Ireland flows to-day in the veins of 40,000,000 citizens of the American nation.



may be useful to remember this fact when the next edition of bowdlerised nationalism is published by the Treasury bench.

While large numbers of wealthy ex-Irish have shed their ancient patriotism in their new citizenship, and have forgotten Ireland for the Great Republic—which after all is not unnatural—a movement of another and more satisfactory kind for Irishmen has been noticed to be in progress with increasing force. Large numbers of American Irishmen, usually men of high education and distinguished position, are bent on combining the advancement of American power with the vindication and restoration of Irish independence. Their American nationalism may be called imperialism of the most imperial type. There is no height of greatness and glory to which their America is not destined to soar, according to their belief and policy. At the same time, a result of America's predominance is to replace the crown of freedom on the captive princess of the bards and chiefs. 'Our Irish ally would lend us the magnificent Irish harbours for the European concentrations of the American fleet.' In view of the enormous multitude of American citizens of Irish descent, in view of the high influence of the distinguished Irish-Americans who—an ever-increasing number—seek to combine the glory of the eagle with the revival of the harp, a most serious gravity and importance can be attributed to this latest development of the Irish idea beyond the Atlantic. I sat one afternoon in the garden of a delightful villa on Long Island Sound. There were present eminent lawyers, judges of the supreme court, a distinguished soldier, writers of wide fame, gentlemen of ease and fortune, graduates of Harvard and Yale. 'Irish America,' said a spokesman of the forward school, 'is not dead nor sleeping. There is no Irish citizen of the Republic but resents the stain upon his ancestry so long as the homeland of his race remains enslaved. America will be greater than any of us here can realise, however keenly we may hope for the greatest possible. The Irish sons of Columbia will do their duty to their American allegiance and will keep

every vow which Irish Americans have sworn to the forgotten home.' All these gentlemen were men of high culture and education ; and reading had revived, while transforming, the ancient memory and the ancient resolve. The knowledge which is power was theirs. American imperialism would shelter and restore the nationhood of Erin. It was a very different note from the ferocious scream of the *Irish World*. I could understand how the proud leaders of Irish America had come to recognise that the arena of world politics has possibilities denied to a narrower field. 'Ireland a State of the Union ?' I asked. 'Let us say an armed confederate.' And I thought of Isaac Butt's rejected offer to England.

As I have been obliged to refer to the ambiguous menace of the secret Hibernians in the service of the present ascendancy in Ireland, it should also be mentioned that the same order exists in enormous numbers in the United States. I believe that there are 350,000 affiliated members of the Ancient Order of Hibernians within the states of the Union. Their constitution, their symbols and passwords, their exclusion of non-Catholics, their lodge chaplaincies held by Catholic priests, their traditions which invoke the names of the Rapparees and Owen Roe O'Neill's confederates, are substantially the same with the organisation in Ireland. In token of their fealty to the Old Land, they used to receive their signs and passwords from the Board of Erin. For some time back, however, there has been a wide separation between the Board of Erin and the American Order, especially since the Board of Erin has been subordinated to the same policy as the Parliamentary party. Some months ago an apparent effort was made to heal the breach, and a mission was sent over to Ireland from America for the purpose. As the American organisation, however, is openly devoted to what we may call the Fenian independence of Ireland, the attempted pacification has fallen through. The American Hibernians compose a body of men of great individual respectability and great collective power. They devote themselves to much



practical beneficence towards poor or disabled Irish people. They have fostered the Gaelic revival from its commencement, and founded and endowed with £10,000 from their own funds a professorship of Irish in the Catholic University of Washington. They are assiduously courted by the Clann-na-Gael, and are believed to be on intimate terms with the Clann-na-Gael. Like the Clan, they used to support the Irish party and the leadership of Parnell. Their parades, banquets, picnics, and other festive celebrations are a prominent feature in the social life of Irish America. The Church appears to get on with them very well also in America; and Irishmen of great experience have told me that in America the existence of such a vow-bound confederacy was of the utmost necessity to the Irish, both as Nationalists and Catholics, in view of the secret associations of all sorts which used to swarm in almost every relation of life. There is perhaps much less necessity for an organisation of the kind to-day than in past epochs of American history, when the know-nothings and similar bodies of a frankly hostile character assailed the rights of Catholics, and especially the Irish Catholics, to a dangerous extent. It may be mentioned that in conjunction with other influences, the advent of such vast numbers of Slav and Latin immigrants into the United States, has had the result of definitely classing even the modern immigration from Ireland with the original pioneer stock of the States. This was less difficult in view of the large numbers of Irish who were in the States from their foundation. The Friendly Society of St. Patrick raised a large war loan for the troops of General Washington. An Irish soldier, General Sullivan, fired the first shot in the American Revolution and captured an English store of ammunition, which served to load the American muskets at Bunker's Hill. An Irish sailor, the famous Captain Barry, founded the American Navy. At any rate, the coming of the Slavs and Latins has completed the identification of the Irish with the native Americans who boast their descent from the Cavalier and Puritan founders of the early colonies. The practical repudiation



of the present Parliamentary party by the American Hibernians as well as the American Fenians, completes the contrast with the state of things prevailing down to the fall of Parnell. Just as the mechanical efficacy of the parliamentary system for monopolising the official voice of Ireland has approached perfection, the real majority of the race has slipped away completely from its control and even from its alliance. When the former lieutenants of Parnell, whom Mr. Gladstone set up as leaders on their own account, now pretend to propose or accept terms of Home Rule, as between Ireland and Downing Street, all real ratification is denied to the proceeding by the hostile abstention of all that used to be called Nationalist in the history of Ireland. Personally speaking, I do not see how any scheme of subordinate Home Rule could last for ten minutes on the banks of the Liffey after the protecting arm of a British garrison had been withdrawn. Nor do I think that the rank and file of the Irish Ribbonmen, even supposing that their chiefs in the Board of Erin remained submissive to their venerable guides, would seriously separate themselves from the universal repudiation in store for such a proposal on the part of all sections of militant patriotism. Just as the system has been brought to a mechanical completion, the principal forces which it was intended to contain are discovered to have marched outside of it and against it. The opposition between official fact and reality has never perhaps been more conspicuous in Ireland.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### INTERVENTION IN GENERAL AND IMPERIAL AFFAIRS

**RECAPITULATION**—Annotation to Debates against Flogging—Objections to an Ambassador—Foundation of Constitutional Union of India—Indian Press and Leaders accept my Proposals—Inauguration of the Constitutional Society of India—The National Democratic League—Election Expenses the Bulwark of the Dublin Tammany—The Clergy and the League—The Fraud on the Electorate—Gombeeman and League Press—Conclusion—A Lesson from Ancient Rome.

I MAY now briefly recapitulate what has been shown in the preceding pages, before adding some illustration of the working of the policy of intervention, not merely in Irish and English matters and House of Commons business, but in the vast field of Imperial affairs, and especially in reference to India. I venture to recommend these instances to the consideration of men of statesmanship and political critics of the more deliberate kind, the R. H. Huttons and Walter Bagehots of the time. The seven years of preparation for politics which I owed to my father's directions resulted in thirty years of further studies, and action which has not been altogether unproductive. I may be allowed to claim the credit for some hard, hard work.

Recapitulation need not be difficult nor elaborate. The facts are now on the surface. The preliminary study of the situation which led to the creation of the Home Rule movement and party by Mr. Isaac Butt necessitated some realist examination of what followed the unconstitutional suspension of the sittings of the Irish Parliament and the assumption of its functions by the Parliament established by the Act of Union. In spite of religious and dynastic war and sedition, the Irish Parliament had raised the Irish population of 1,000,000 at the end of the seventeenth century to the 6,000,000 at the end of the eighteenth, had

multiplied wealth, had effected legislative independence, had enfranchised the Catholics by a measure of toleration unprecedented between Catholics and Protestants, and had seen the new voters march under their clergy to assist the destructive designs of Mr. Pitt. For some strange reason or reasoning Mr. Pitt had destroyed the Irish citadel of loyalty and Conservatism. His successors were to strip the Irish proprietors of the support of their small freeholders and to confine the Catholic representation of Ireland to the class which was influenced by the utmost hostility to the creed and possessions of the former lords of Irish legislation. The Catholic emancipation which outlawed the vast majority of the agricultural electorate left the agricultural interest to the mercy of place-hunting O'Connellites and their progeny, who actually aided the British manufacturers to sacrifice every corn-grower in Ireland to the unchecked enterprise of foreign competition and speculation. The potato failure of 1845, 1846, and 1847 became the most hideous famine in the modern history of Europe through the refusal of the Manchester School to interfere with the economic liberty of ruin, and through the criminal insanity of the Union Parliament in making the grant of relief conditional on the proof of hopeless destitution; and the proof under the quarter-acre clause was the surrender of all the holdings on which the nation might have lived and thrived after the temporary visitation had passed away. The quarter-acre clause and its congeners sent two millions of Irish people to starvation deaths, and two millions to the foul and despairing steerages of the emigrant ships. The Fenian conspiracy was the long-delayed reply of the Irish exiles to the makers of the Black Famine. The Home Rule movement was taken by Isaac Butt from courts of law, where gallant rebels were sentenced to the jails of thugs and ravishers, and from desolate fields and streets cursed by the want of native protection. In return for the restoration of the Irish Constitution, Butt offered England the autonomy of Great Britain and the confederation and representation of the



Empire. The need of retaliation and the intensity of resentment provoked by the Union Parliament's rejection of Home Rule—the rejection and the manner of it—gave birth to the active policy. It had this dominant quality, which usually commands success, thorough knowledge of the situation to be met and the means to meet it. It matters little if some of its instruments were fallible or false. In answer to the suppression of the free Parliament of Ireland the free Parliament of England has ceased to exist. A Corps Législatif, which M. de Morny might have designed and M. Rouher manipulated, came to take its place; nor will the revenge of the Three Irishmen be limited to the defacement of the House of Commons. The mechanism of ministerialism and the muzzling of debate enforce the lesson of popular irreverence in proportion as they realise the perfection of the bureaucrat and the Caesarian; nor will the fundamental institutions of ancient authority at Westminster escape a deeper contumely than the rights of Ireland suffered from the mercenaries of Pitt.

As I stated in the enumeration of the principles of the active policy at an earlier page, I never offered a suggestion, nor had occasion to offer it, in the course of all my opposition which, if taken, would not have been, in my purpose and intention, of the greatest benefit to the greatest number in the Empire. I have never professed the hate of England, nor do I profess it now. The English are a great race. Englishmen have been my friends, and they have been my honest and courteous enemies. There have been exceptions, but very few. The policy of England, the success of England, were not only perfectly compatible with the views which I maintained, but I still hold that they depend fundamentally upon the realisation of my projects. If England chose the worse alternative, that is an incident of the freedom of the will. I always gave good counsel to the King of Ireland; and if the King of the United Kingdom was misadvised and maladvised by his ministers, I shall not say, Off with their heads! Their malfeasance might well deserve a more perceptible privation.

In the matters which I have now to treat, I had to depend on my personal initiative, and often on nothing else. My best allies were the circumstances. I understood thoroughly that it must be so before I had proceeded very far with the recommendation of my views to Irish politicians. Intervention in the policy of the British Empire naturally seemed incomprehensible to all the intellects which were anxious about the succession to the postmastership of Ballinacorney. Did Ireland possess a governing class, I should not have wanted coadjutors. It has been the double misfortune of the country first to lose the nobility of the clans by the gratuitous and unpatriotic flight to the Continent after the Treaty of Limerick, and secondly, to be deprived of the services of the Anglo-Irish aristocracy by their suicidal adoption of the Unionist delusion after the suppression of the Irish Parliament. You cannot improvise Roman senators or Venetian patricians out of the oracles of suburban debating societies or the acknowledged stars of municipal eloquence. The *Freeman's Journal* had no use for the grievances of Yorkshire farmers or the discontent of a hundred million Hindus. They did not interest Sackville Street. Even large-minded and sympathetic colleagues were depressed by the certainty of indifference and the probability of censure. 'What the devil is he talking about Egypt for? Isn't Cork good enough for him?' Usually I had to find my own supporters, and very often they were outside of Parliament. Fortunately the admirable composition and construction of party government seemed to be especially devised to afford me consolation. If you appear to be assailing the ins, you can so often count upon the whole-souled assistance of the outs! And there were always a number of considerate persons who were predisposed to take a good speaking part in any good cause at all. The parliamentary and party government of an empire is a rare and inimitable illustration of human nature.<sup>1</sup> Is there any change which

<sup>1</sup> The late Lord Salisbury, who was beyond all comparison the greatest statesman of England in the past fifty years, often honoured me with



could altogether fail to improve it? I did not always propose to improve it; but I felt justified in making use of its little peculiarities and opportunities.

I have already referred at some length to my foundation of the Farmers' Alliance in England in order to 'carry the war into Carthage,' in order to revenge on the Tory squires and Lord Beaconsfield their worse than indifference to the wrongs of my country. While they were refusing moderate reforms which would have obviated the coming revolution, I undertook to organise against them their own stolid and trusted agriculturists. I suggested, designed, assisted, and started—with the aid of the Irish party chairman, Mr. Shaw, Mr. O'Shaughnessy, who had been Butt's colleague at Limerick, and Mr., afterwards Sir, Rowland Blennerhassett, and a couple of other Irishmen—the British organisation which emptied sixty Tory seats at the General Election of 1880. I have never found any difficulty in entering into the sentiments and grievances of other human persons, whether Britons or Bengalis. When I felt that I was carrying out my principle of Irish intervention in Imperial affairs, I seemed to possess a charmed persuasiveness. It was sometimes difficult to support with the proper decorum the woes of a thousand-acre farmer from the best soil in England, and at the same time bear in mind that one hundred tenants in Ireland would be rich if they could share this gentleman's sad fate, neatly apportioned in ten-acre plots among the pinched and worn multitude. But I never shrank from the call of duty; and, after all, it was not the thousand-acre capitalist's reasonable

his kind appreciation of my 'knowledge and judgment on foreign affairs,' and often deplored the marvellous incompetence of the parliamentary party system to meet the gravest needs of the Empire and its component nations. I have a letter of his before me in reference to one of the very greatest questions of public policy at the time, in which he expresses forcibly the perplexities of a statesman who has to serve his country under such a handicap. Speaking of a danger of the first magnitude, Lord Salisbury wrote: 'A defensive policy will not hold Xyxyxyx back. A defensive policy by itself is a poor reliance in any death struggle. . . . If it can be done at all—and I doubt whether our form of government is not too flabby for such measures—it must have made some progress before. . . .' Too flabby! The eminent statesman under-expressed his opinion. Too flabby! Even in a death struggle!



or unreasonable complaint that was the question of the moment, but his vote against the Tories.

A more impressive specimen of our policy of intervention was certainly the campaign for the abolition of flogging in the Army. It was really a campaign. It lasted three months from the introduction of the Bill which proposed to continue the foul torture and the foul shame of the Army for an indefinite future. We had only some half-hundred supporters when we opened the fight, and there were against us five times the number of Whigs and Tories, including almost every military and naval officer in the House as well as the front benches. The British Army always had been flogged, and could there be a finer army? Red coats covered the scars of the cat-o'-nine-tails from Blenheim to Inkerman. The lash and the triangles were as fruitful of victory as the playing-fields of Eton! We abolished all that. We gave a clean and honourable Army to the State. We did the greatest service to human dignity and military pride which could be done. Who has thanked us? It is true that the most of us were Englishmen and Scotsmen in that long combat, and that our true leader was a Scotsman who sat for an English constituency, Alexander MacDonald, the miners' member for Stafford; but even that did not save the battle from being denounced as mere obstruction. From thinking of the struggle against flogging as mere obstruction, the next step in evolution was to assume that Parnell must have led it; and indeed many years afterwards Mr. Chamberlain referred to Parnell as having 'raised the question of flogging in the Army.' It is true that but for half a dozen Irishmen at first, and more later on, Mr. P. A. Taylor, Mr. C. Hopwood, and Mr. Alexander MacDonald above all, might never have succeeded in 1879. Parnell and I spoke some 160 times each in the interminable struggles by which we wore down the majority and aroused the feeling of the masses. For myself, I admit that I intervened quite consciously as a part of my policy of intervening in every good cause, however English, which deserved help and

which would honour Ireland. But the cause belonged to humanity, and the leaders and the majority of our troop, which became a conquering host, were Englishmen and Scotsmen. Yet it was all Irish obstruction according to most of the organs of opinion ! As I am writing history, let me cite a letter which I wrote to Mr. Chamberlain giving the correct narrative, and which Mr. Chamberlain acknowledged to be accurate. I would ask the courteous reader also to note the reference to the London Trades Council. I was in constant communication with it, and, through its humane and able secretary, with the whole world of the trades which we organised from north to south against the last flogging Bill. No nobler fight was ever fought.

The following was my note to Mr. Chamberlain. The most careful reference to 'Hansard' will confirm the absolute accuracy of this brief account of one of the most important passages in the modern history of the House of Commons. I would invite the reader to find, if he can spare the time, the record of the sitting in which Alexander MacDonald related to the House the story of his father's flogging for a petty fault of negligence. The House has seldom been more deeply moved. But it was all obstruction according to the organs of clubland.

Right Hon. J. CHAMBERLAIN, M.P.

DEAR SIR,

As one of your colleagues in your successful opposition to the last Army Flogging Bill, and as one who stands recorded in 'Hansard' as having spoken 164 times against that measure, permit me to protest most earnestly against your generous error in stating in the House last night that Mr. Parnell raised the question of flogging on the Army Discipline Act of 1879. Permit me to suggest that your words should have referred to Mr. Parnell's part in reforming the Prison Discipline Regulations of a previous year. Mr. Parnell had absolutely nothing to do with raising the question of flogging in the Army. That is one of the most pertinacious legends of the Parnell movement.

It was not Mr. Parnell, but an English veteran of humanitarian reform, Mr. P. A. Taylor of Leicester, who raised the question



by a motion against flogging on the Army Discipline Bill. Prevented by ill-health from appearing in the House, Mr. Taylor confided his amendment to another English champion of reform, Mr. C. H. Hopwood of Stockport. Mr. Hopwood accordingly raised the question, and not Mr. Parnell. I can give you day and date. It was in Committee of the House on May 20, 1879. We divided on the amendment for omitting the words 'or corporal punishment' from Clause 44 (Scale of Punishments by Court Martial), but there were 239 votes against us. We had 56. I have not the voting list by me, but I am certain that in our minority there were along with many Irishmen, dozens of our English and Scottish colleagues.

Neither did Mr. Parnell organise, although he joined it, what I may call the managing committee of the opposition to flogging in the Army. That was in the first place the work of Mr. Alexander MacDonald, the miners' member for Stafford, one of the best specimens of a Labour member who will ever be seen in Parliament. He had had bitter cause for his action, as he afterwards told the House in one of the most passionate sittings of a passionate time. He was the son of a cruelly flogged and innocent man, for his father had been a seaman in the Royal Navy. The next member to join us was Mr. Joseph Cowen of Newcastle. Then followed Mr. Hopwood and Mr. Alexander Sullivan. Mr. Cowan was specially deputed to secure your indispensable counsel and comradeship; and I well remember the words in which he conveyed your answer: 'Chamberlain is with us, thick and thin. Only he says do not obstruct too much. Let the Government have plenty of rope. And let public opinion have time to move.' Mr. Parnell, Mr. Peter Rylands of Burnley, and Mr. Thomas Burt of Morpeth were counted upon, of course, from the outset.

The crisis of the Bill came on July 3, seven weeks after Mr. Hopwood had raised the question, and it was not Mr. Parnell who provoked the crisis. It was another Irish member, Mr. Philip Callan. He had seen the sealed patterns of the 'cats' at the War Office and the Admiralty, and he came down to the House with the demand that before the vote should be taken on the question, the pattern 'cats' should be brought to the House for the inspection of members, so that they might know exactly to what punishment they were asked to condemn the sons and brothers of British and Irish workmen. To support Mr. Callan's contention, it was not Mr. Parnell, but Mr. Alexander MacDonald who moved 'to report progress' until the 'cats'



were produced. Mr. Parnell, of course, supported Mr. Callan and Mr. MacDonald, and so did Mr. Jacob Bright, Mr. Williams, and Mr. Herschell, as well as the Irishmen.

Mr. O'Connor Power boldly claimed that 'a specimen cat' should be placed in the library. It was a case of produce the 'cat' or 'stop the Bill.' If I may presume to mention myself for the sake of historical accuracy, I find that at this sitting I was the object of a special disciplinary measure on the motion of Sir Stafford Northcote, the Leader of the House, 'for having used threats and menaces outraging the independence of Parliament,' to wit, as the Clerk of the House read my words as he had taken them down: 'that the Bill will not be allowed to move one inch until the 'cat' is produced, and that, if necessary, 500,000 Londoners will assemble in Hyde Park.' Of course Mr. Parnell spoke and voted, but there were many others as well, Englishmen as well as Irishmen, Dillwyn, Courtney, Chamberlain. The Government withdrew their measure against me, and next day the 'cats' were produced in the cloak room for the inspection of members, and flogging in the Army was abolished for ever.

Of course I meant no menace to the liberties of Parliament, and I had merely stated what the London Trades Council had empowered me to state. I should add that we were informed that Mr. Arch, afterwards a member of the House, was playing a most important part in rousing the agricultural labourers to a full sense of the importance of the question. Among the Irishmen, I always understood that it was not Mr. Parnell and not I, but two Irish military officers and members of Parliament, Major O'Beirne, and the then Captain Nolan, who first raised the question at private meetings of the Irish party, under the chairmanship of Mr. Shaw.

During the five years, from 1875 to '80, in which I co-operated with Mr. Parnell, though afterwards opposing his policy and leadership of the Land League, I always knew him as a gallant fighter for every humanitarian reform. But he did not raise the question of flogging in the Army.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

F. HUGH O'DONNELL.

Before passing to my next illustration of our policy, I would add in reference to the names of Colonel Nolan and Major O'Beirne, which I introduced in the foregoing

letter, that both these gentlemen were typical specimens of a class of Irish members which, though quite outshone, in the opinion of the public and the newspapers, by colleagues better furnished with powers of speech, were in reality the most valuable portion of the Home Rule party, as indeed such men must be in all parties which aim at more than the verbal cut and thrust of debate and denunciation. Colonel Nolan in particular was a scientific artillerist, as well as a country gentleman of considerable estate and many occupations; and Major O'Beirne had seen much military service all over the world, and was also a county proprietor of experience and capacity. There was a very large number of such eminent citizens in Mr. Butt's party, who were really capable of administering the affairs of their country, although they never got the opportunity, in consequence of the affairs of Ireland being mismanaged by persons outside of Ireland. At the same time, they had no share of the dazzling and blazing reputation enjoyed by the orators of the party, who for the most part were absolutely good for nothing except this sort of sonorous talk. It is the universal curse of all parliamentary systems and all governments by gab, that to have the power to produce a flow of words on some exciting occasion is esteemed infinitely higher than the power to understand and administer a great country. I remember that Major O'Beirne, who spoke excellently and sensibly while seated, at once began to hesitate and lose the thread of his discourse when obliged to rise to his feet. He was accordingly regarded as quite of second-rate intelligence by a dozen of talking men, who were absolutely incapable of dealing with the more solid interests of a nation, with which the shy but able soldier was thoroughly conversant. I may go on to remark, that of the whole dozen or so of prominent orators who engrossed the attention of the public during those years, I cannot remember more than two whose opinion was worth anything upon any solid interest of the Irish situation. Most of them, indeed, as I have observed already, were brought into Parliament by the funds of the Land League

from positions which demanded no sort of knowledge above the level of a fifth-rate clerk or draper's assistant. But they were intelligent, lively, audacious, flippant, denunciatory, often eloquent; and nothing more is required for the attainment of fame and fortune under government by gab.

A totally different sort of intervention in Imperial affairs is illustrated by my next example. I refer to my indictment of the career of the French ambassador, M. Challe mel-Lacour, just after his appointment to the Court of St. James. Now, I frankly admit at the outset that my proceeding was absolutely unjustifiable from the point of view of any respecter of the law and constitution. The French ambassador might represent new and important advantages to English policy, and I believe that in fact he did. Gambetta had effected a distinct advance towards a pro-English policy, and there was great joy in Mr. Gladstone's Cabinet at the result. But I did not respect the law and constitution. I was in the House for the special purpose of making things difficult for the law and constitution, until the constitution of Ireland had been restored. I had special reasons, besides, for my action against the ambassador. He represented a party in France which was at deadly war with some of my closest friends. In raking up the earlier history of the ambassador I knew that I would please and assist many of my oldest friends on the Continent. No Englishman, as I have admitted, would do what I was resolved to do. He would have shrunk back from the many public inconveniences which might attend such a motion as mine. I only seized with the greater pleasure the occasion to show that a resolute Irishman could intervene with remorseless effect in the most delicate concerns of the British Government. As will be seen from the text of the questions which I put to the Foreign Office, I had armed myself carefully with the most exact references to French official documents and proceedings.

Mr. O'Donnell to ask :—(1) Is M. Challe mel-Lacour, spoken



of as future French ambassador to England, the Citizen Challemel Lacour, who, as one of the Prefects of the Provisional Government of September 4, 1870, ordered the massacre of Colonel Carayon Latour's battalion, in the telegram '*Fusillez-moi ces gens-là,*' contained in the Report of the Commission of the National Assembly on the subject, and who has since been condemned in a court of justice in France to pay some £3000 compensation for his share in the plunder of a convent during the same period ?

Mr. O'Donnell to ask :—(2) Whether the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs would take steps, through our Ambassador at Paris or otherwise, to obtain for the information of the House, a copy of that part of the deposition of General Bressolles (volume four of the '*Enquête Parlementaire sur les actes du Gouvernement de la Défense Nationale*') in which that officer is reported as giving his evidence upon a written order, '*Fusillez-moi ces gens-là,*' received by him during the administration of M. Challemel-Lacour at Lyons, on the occasion when Colonel Carayon Latour's battalion of the Mobiles of the Gironde, quartered at Vénissieux in the department of the Rhône, removed a red flag which had been publicly displayed: and whether he would take steps, through our Ambassador at Paris or otherwise, to obtain for the information of the House copies of the judgment of the Appeal Court of Dijon, delivered on January 21, 1879, confirming the judgment of the Court of Lyons in the case of the Christian Brothers of Caluire against MM. Challemel-Lacour, Vassel, and others, in a demand for compensation for loss and damage suffered in consequence of the seizure and sale of personal effects and expropriation of landed property in virtue of written orders of those gentlemen.

If the English reader will limit his appreciation of these matters to indignant sentiments at my disregard of traditions which should be sacred to every Englishman, this narrative would be imperfectly estimated, and the English reader would miss what concerns him in the highest degree. The point is, that under the Act of Union the most vital interests of English government are exposed to the most dangerous interventions, especially under a parliamentary system which appears to be specially contrived for the promotion of public injury of every description. It was

true that the members from Ireland, though professing most deadly hostility to the Act of Union, had, and have, made little use of their opportunities. That negligence was due to many causes, to ignorance usually, to sheer funk in many cases, to insincerity coupled with reluctance to offend English opinion. But *if* there were an Irish representative party, willing as well as capable, and above all things capable, the entire government of the State would be practically under siege, and the business of government and administration could only be maintained by the practical suppression of parliamentary liberty or the open suppression of Irish representation. I chose the form of questions because questioning did not require the support of others. If I had a party of eighty competent comrades, every form of the House and every department of the Government would be equally exposed to a perpetual and insuperable intervention. It is not to be forgotten that, under the parliamentary system, the ministers in charge of departments are the haphazard products of party shuffles of the cards. They are not experts. At best they are speaking trumpets for the permanent officials. But no prompting by permanent officials could fit them to face a body of hostile experts, supported by a body of determined votes, engaged in that remorseless examination of estimates, ministerial replies, foreign and colonial incidents, which are at present hushed up and hidden away by mutual consent, and which, if not hushed up and hidden away, would render the Government impossible or perilous to the last extent. As the Irish members always confine themselves to Irish local tumults and scandals, which can be conveniently railed off and quarantined by Government without much interference with more important concerns, their uncouth agitation and exaggeration are more matter for the comic writers than obstacles to Imperial rule and administration. A single expert is more dangerous to Imperialism than all the clan of the leagues and the sacristies, even if the latter were really hostile to the Union, which they are not.



My questions concerning M. Challemel-Lacour could not be answered. They were nothing but fact. The distinguished man who was now French ambassador, like Gambetta himself, had risen to prominence in the revolutionary movement which took advantage of the foreign invasion of France in order to overthrow the established order of government. Personally I hated that revolution and deplored that overthrow with the utmost intensity of my convictions. Quite apart from any desire to embarrass the Government of Mr. Gladstone, I was glad of an opportunity to bring some of the incidents in which the Gambettist system had originated into the light of day on an occasion so conspicuous and on a platform so important. Conscious of the impossibility of controverting my statements, the Premier took refuge in a parliamentary revolution. He moved, and the Speaker permitted the motion, that the member for Dungarvan be no longer heard. The expedient was crushing. Unfortunately it crushed too much. If the Government of the day could move that a member from Ireland be no longer heard, he could make the same motion with regard to members from Great Britain. Before Mr. Gladstone had realised what he had done—he never really knew how to lead the House—the whole of the Conservative party were in arms, and a good many on their legs, in alarmed protest against this summary abolition of representative government itself. The contest raged for several mortal hours. The case of M. Challemel-Lacour, instead of occupying the place of an inconvenient question, now filled a whole page of the *Times*. This result far more than fulfilled my most extreme expectations. I took the earliest possible opportunity of slipping out of the disturbance which had become an earthquake. I had been repudiated by every speaker of every party in the House, Mr. Parnell and his leading lieutenants included. My action had in effect assailed too closely the very core of Imperial administration for mere make-believes like the representatives of the League to risk their clumsiness and



cowardice in the conflict. Like Mrs. Partington, they were good at a slop or a puddle. They were as fit for *la haute politique* as a cow for astronomy.

Lord Salisbury said to me long afterwards, in half-jest and whole earnest, that my incursion into the most sacred recesses of Imperial administration had first converted Mr. Gladstone to the necessity of excluding the Irish members from the Imperial Parliament. Judging by the mass of congratulations which reached me from all the capitals of Europe, my action had been crowned with extraordinary success from my point of view, and with extraordinary evil and obloquy from the point of view of the Treasury bench. Mr. Gladstone thoroughly understood that he had to deal with a hostile expert in foreign and colonial affairs especially. To do him justice, for he was a great Englishman, he lost few opportunities of thwarting or minimising my actions.

#### PANINDIAN UNION

From the earliest days of my connexion with Parliament I had devoted myself to the grievances of India. As I have related at an early page of these volumes, it was a motion and a speech on certain actions of the India Office, in relation to an Indian famine, which both formed my first instalment of the policy of intervention in April 1874, and obtained me the distinction of my first column in the parliamentary reports of the *Times*. While eating my dinners at the Inner Temple I had formed the habit of making acquaintance with the numerous law students from India to be found at the Inns of Court. A fortuitous introduction in Paris to the Parsi partner of a great Bombay house brought me into connexion with a whole group of active and intelligent Parsis and Mahrattas, who were much disturbed by the interference of the India Office in the affairs of the native state of Baroda. Quite spontaneously letters of inquiry flowed in to me from Bengal also. As London correspondent of the *Bombay Gazette*, I was in the habit of giving information on Indian affairs

at Westminster which appeared to excite a good deal of attention among Indians of all the provinces. In Parliament also, at an early date, I had defended an important association of Bengal zemindars against more than brusque treatment by the Governor-General, Lord Lytton. I entered into close relation with the Hon. Kristodas Pal, the unquestioned brains-carrier of the Hindus of Bengal. Through my friends in Bombay I was no less fortunate in obtaining the confidence of distinguished men of the Mohammedan community, whom I always found—contrary to their fanatical reputation—to be men of calm judgment and great kindness of temperament. There was no year in Parliament in which I did not devote a large portion of my time to the defence of Indian interests. I was warmly thanked by Lord Hartington for my contributions to the Government's information on the subject of the excess of mortality in Indian jails and the hideous frequency of jail floggings. I have been told that my protests worked an astounding change in both directions, and that the jail floggings in particular, which approached 20,000 a year when I took up the subject of this horror, dwindled to a couple of hundred a year after I had directed Lord Hartington's high-minded sympathy to the wanton cruelty of the evil. If I had been an Englishman, I suppose that pæans of laudation would have been inscribed to my name in all the leading journals as a noble example of what a good Englishman was doing for subject races. As I was an Irishman, my best work was sneered down as brainless obstruction. It was in the end, however, an Irish rather than an Indian grievance which moved me to effect an intervention in Indian affairs which will never cease to influence the relations between India and England.

One Indo-Irish grievance was of a minor but characteristic kind, and it continues in worse proportions to the present day. Annoyed by the great numbers of clever Irish students who won their way to high places in the India Civil Service by open competition against Englishmen, and irritated by the wholesale defeat which Irish ability



in these departments was inflicting upon English rivalry, the British Government at home, in conjunction with the India Office, determined to exclude the Irishmen by the simple but discreditable expedient of practically confining the choice of examiners at the competitive examinations to professors and tutors from Oxford and Cambridge, by which plan the Government granted an enormous advantage to Oxford and Cambridge students who for years had studied under those professors and tutors, knew their methods, and could almost divine their questions. The students from Ireland, having had no previous acquaintance with the ways of the examiners, at once found themselves handicapped to a degree which has practically eliminated the Irish element from the Civil Service of India. It was a foul blow. When we remember the long and illustrious roll of great servants of the Crown contributed to India under a system of fair play, the new policy was as stupid as it was base. As I was an Imperialist as well as a Nationalist I resented the stupidity as well as the injustice of this proceeding. Among other English statesmen I addressed myself to Lord Salisbury in particular, as the man who was best able to influence the Administration in the matter. I had in particular a long and somewhat agitated interview with him in the library at Arlington House. Fairminded, honourable, statesmanlike as he was, full of the love of fair play as he was, I found him adamant, nevertheless, on the subject of securing a predominance to Oxford and Cambridge. He believed that 'the tone of the national universities' was an Imperial asset which deserved to be cultivated. I maintained that the particular method of cultivation was not fair. Lord Salisbury was adamant. To summarise again the substance of my final protest and warning, I said: 'My Lord, the Englishman has many virtues, but I do not think that excessive sympathy with other races is one of them. I do not think that the tone of Oxford and Cambridge will supply that sympathy. The day, my Lord, when you will have India staffed from end to end with Englishmen from Oxford and Cambridge,



that day English rule in India will stand isolated in the midst of the hundreds of millions whom Oxford and Cambridge will have estranged from England for ever.' Lord Salisbury only replied: 'Mr. O'Donnell, you speak as a good Irishman, but I believe that when you think of it, you will give us credit for nobler intentions.' I bowed and withdrew.<sup>1</sup>

My mind was now quite made up. A project of which I had often thought now took shape and acquired consistency. If the British Government intended to exclude Irishmen from India, I would teach the British Government that it had undertaken a task beyond its capacities. I resolved to unite all India in a national confederacy of the Indian races and provinces without distinction, to impress upon their racial and religious distinction the seal of a patriotic combination, and to call into being the national co-operation of Indians.

Mr. Ganendra Mohun Tagore, a wealthy Hindu gentleman from Bengal, long resident in London, was my foremost ally. A member of an old princely caste, he had inherited a vast estate, and in spite of an excessive amount of the family litigation, which has taken the place of ancient struggles with sword in hand, he was still the possessor of a splendid income of £40,000 or £50,000 a year. His house in Collingham Gardens, Kensington, was the seat of lavish hospitality to Indians and friends of India. I

<sup>1</sup> The Irish are not only excluded from all better berths in the Civil Service, both India and Home, by the Government conspiracy to pack the examination board with Oxford and Cambridge examiners. Every kind of public employment of importance and emolument is reserved by the British State for the nominees of a Board of Selection set up in the favoured seats of this industry. A writer in the *Times* of December 25, 1909, page 9, thus relates with complacency a personal experience:—

'The Army, the Navy, the Civil Service, all call for the best material and offer their highest rates of pay to men who go out. The Universities have now a thing, unknown in my day, "a Board of Selection" permanently established. This board furnishes the names of the most desirable men to the heads of departments. One of my sons was thus spotted as soon as he took his degree, and in six weeks he was in full harness, his pay beginning from the moment he stepped on board the liner.'

Thus, in Egypt, the valuable situations for British subjects which accompany the conscientious effort to raise the country, are reserved for an anti-Irish ring. What Irish valour is permitted to win, British universities are privileged to enjoy. It is an Imperial-minded Empire.



MR. GLADSTONE MOVING "THAT MR. O'DONNELL BE NO LONGER HEARD."  
*Moonshine* caricature.





owed my introduction to Mr. Tagore to my old friend, Mr. Carlo Biale, of Calcutta and London, whose Italian family possessed many branches in the mercantile enterprise of Bengal, some members of which having also married into native society. I remember meeting at Mr. Biale's house a brown-skinned O'Brien, who was descended from an Irish soldier of fortune in the army of some native prince a hundred years ago. Mr. Tagore had followed with the keenest sympathy my defence of the Transvaal, and my numerous motions on behalf of reforms in India. He was a Bengali of Bengalis. Gradually I led him to think of the possibility of creating a national bond of brotherhood among all Indians without restriction of caste or creed or language. We spoke of nothing but reform. There was no suspicion of illegality in our conversation. We spoke of reform. And we got to agree that no reform of the kind which leading Indians felt was necessary could be obtained without the influence of United India to back the reformers. Mr. Tagore, like all high-born Indians, deeply resented the overbearing treatment and manner vouchsafed to them by many specimens of the English administration and garrison in India. He was essentially a moderate man, though capable of passionate language when carried away by an oratorical impulse. He was an orator of considerable power even in English, though his accent was exotic. His resentment at the attitude of which Indians complained was mildness itself compared to the hot indignation which I have heard from well-born men of all castes. I remember a proud and powerful prince exclaiming with a burst of passion: 'Irish gentlemen do not understand what we have to suffer. The nobles of our land, sprung from the ancient gods, are trampled under foot by butchers' sons.' It was precisely this lack of sympathetic conduct towards the Indians which I had in view when I reminded Lord Salisbury that the exclusion of the Irish would not improve the hold of an English Civil Service upon the affections of the Indian peoples.

After my unsuccessful interview with Lord Salisbury I

pressed my propositions with added earnestness upon Mr. Tagore. I had often met Indians of influence and distinction at his house. I knew that he had the power to bring together practically all the Indians who were resident for purposes of study, or for other reasons, in London and the university towns. He hesitated, however, to take the step which I recommended, doubting in fact the readiness of his own countrymen to follow such a novel policy as an appeal to the patriotism of the whole of India, with its innumerable divisions and distinctions of every kind. I found a means to convert his hesitation into enthusiasm. I laid before him the important communication which I quote below, which I had received from the foremost representatives of the Bengal Presidency a few years before, and which had been intended to form the basis of an alliance between Indian reformers and the representatives of Ireland in the House of Commons. Neither from Mr. Butt nor from Mr. Parnell had I obtained sufficient support to enable me to proceed with the negotiation. I had been empowered by Indian leaders to offer the Irish Parliamentary party the political and pecuniary support of a great Indian movement, on the condition that Ireland should elect some representatives of India to speak for India in the House of Commons, and that India in return was to endorse the Irish demand for self-government. The precise point to which the negotiation was narrowed down was that four natives of India, to be selected by the Indians themselves, men of university attainments and considerable power of oratory, should be elected for Irish constituencies, to be Irish Home Rulers on all Irish questions, and to be members for India, and to be backed by the Irish party, on Indian affairs. Butt had warmly approved the idea, but told me that, as leader of the Home Rule party, he could not risk the additional hostility from English Conservative quarters which would follow the realisation of such a scheme. Parnell simply could not understand how the proposal could excite interest in Ireland, and he was not disposed to support anything



that was not interesting to the future founders of the Land League. I told my distinguished correspondents in India that, for the moment, the project was impracticable; and so the vision of the Eastern continent being led by the Western island remained a vision and nothing more. There remained, however, the realisation of leadership by a Western man. The following is the letter from representative princes and nobles of Bengal which had offered me the beginnings of an alliance between India and Ireland. The original of this document is carefully preserved, and is in safe keeping. I omit only an unimportant paragraph:—

TO F. H. O'DONNELL, Esq., M.P.,  
Serjeants' Inn, Temple,  
London.

SIR,

We, the undersigned members of the Committee appointed by a public meeting held in Calcutta under the presidency of the Sheriff, on March 2, 1878, beg leave to draw your attention to a petition to Parliament adopted at that meeting regarding Indian expenditure and taxation. A full report of the meeting herewith forwarded contains the petition in question.

The House of Commons has from time to time directed its attention to the state of the Indian finances, but, unfortunately, both Indian expenditure and taxation have steadily increased since the transfer of the Government of India from the East India Company to the Crown. The petitioners have endeavoured to show that the people of India are so poor that one year's drought and scarcity are enough to reduce them to starvation, and that they cannot, therefore, bear the present heavy taxation without being pauperised to a frightful extent. Their only hope of relief from the existing heavy burdens lies in the reduction of expenditure.

The Government of India has repeatedly acknowledged the necessity of economy, but there are certain items of expenditure, such as the Home Military charges of India, in the adjustment of which it has obviously no voice. The present Secretary of State stated in his late evidence concerning Indian Finance, that in this matter he stands in need of the support of Parliament.

For this and other reasons the petitioners have ventured



to appeal to Parliament. We sincerely hope that if you will kindly examine the facts, figures, statements and arguments, contained in the petition, you will admit the reasonableness and justice of the prayer of the petitioners.

You have already distinguished yourself by the lively interest which you take in Indian affairs, and for which we feel deeply grateful to you. The party with which you are connected, and which is ready to espouse any just cause, and to advocate well-founded grievances in Parliament for the removal thereof, may do much in furtherance of the Indian cause, if it will have the goodness to accord its sympathy and support to the people of this country, who are wholly unrepresented in Parliament, and who cannot hope to obtain a hearing in it without the help of those whom Providence has placed in a position to help their fellow-men and their fellow-subjects. We therefore venture to express a hope through you, that your colleagues may see fit to give a generous response to our humble appeal.

We have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servants,

Maharaja JOTEENDRO MOHUN TAGORE,

Maharaja NARENDRA KRISHNA,

Raja KAMUL KRISHNA,

Nawab AMEER ALI,

Raja DIGAMBER MITRA,

Raja RAJENDRO MALICK,

Hon. KRISTODAS PAL.

CALCUTTA,  
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION,  
18 BRITISH INDIAN STREET:  
*March 29, 1878.*

The moderate and circumspect language of this letter was already a recommendation to the cool, judicious spirit of my distinguished Indian friend. In the names attached to this guarded appeal for Irish help he recognised the very flower of the intellectual leaders of Bengal, the princes and nobles of the Hindu and Mohammedan communities. If I had brought together the chiefs of the opposite religions of India in one quarter of the vast empire, it was a good omen that my present project of wider and more permanent union would enjoy the favour of the gods. Above all, perhaps, the concurrence of the illustrious prince of his ancient house, the Maharaja Joteendro Mohun Tagore,

seemed to Ganendra Mohun Tagore a solemn appeal to kinship and race. The just prestige of Mr. Kristodas Pal, who acted as secretary to the committee which had opened the negotiations, completed the convictions of Mr. Tagore. As editor of the *Hindoo Patriot*, as member of the Bengal Legislative Council, Kristodas Pal enjoyed an immense ascendancy in Bengal and throughout India. He was the first Indian since the great Mutiny who had obtained such weight and authority even among the members of the British Administration. For years he had been my close adviser and confidant, and his circumspect genius never betrayed the proud aspirations of his Indian heart.

‘I did not think that the Bengal leaders had gone so far,’ remarked Mr. Tagore. ‘You see,’ I replied, ‘that your ignorance is only due to the fact that there has been no association in existence to place all patriotic Indians in touch with one another. When we have done the work which I ask you to take in hand, it will be impossible for a Mohun Tagore in London to remain in the dark as to what a Maharaja Mohun Tagore in Bengal has agreed to support.’ From that moment Mr. Mohun Tagore devoted himself to the realisation of our idea with all the patient resolution of a strong and deliberate nature.

I was now back to my old post of Professor of Organisation to men and nations who, for one reason or another, had a quarrel with the British Constitution. But what a difference from grinding the A B C of parliamentary intervention into the uninformed minds of a half-illiterate squire and a Belfast bacon merchant, or from bowdlerising the programmes of Irish agrarians to suit the comparative moderation of broad-acred farmers from Yorkshire and Wilts; what a difference even from sitting in council with President Kruger and forecasting the Zulu rising and the Majuba restoration! During the next eighteen months I was to direct the aspirations and aid the intelligence of the most intellectual and philosophic—I use the word advisedly—body of patriotic statesmen whom any man could meet in the most intellectual era of Italian history.

The keen and equable statesmen of the Renaissance, something of the world-wide craft of Venice, and something of the smooth determination of Rome, walked with me, and spoke with me. Their speech was often Babu English, as English folly and misbreeding have nicknamed a linguistic proficiency far superior to the use and wont of England ; but it was well worth while to follow even their most painful efforts in the foreign tongue. What England has lost in failing to win those profound natures and those daring minds !

I do not believe in intermeddling with a trusted agent. Mr. Mohun Tagore was the sole channel to my confidence. No man, were he arch-brahmin and arch-mullah in one, received more than polite phrases from me in those anxious and enthralling months. My policy was so legal and constitutional that I could not run the risk of premature disclosure accompanied by premature misrepresentation. I explained to my Dewan—which, I believe, means Premier—the outline of what I wanted, the nature of the-committees and agencies which were required ; and Mohun Tagore filled in the details and chose the committee-men. I soon found that he was acting in conjunction with authorities who were entitled to his confidence and obedience. What I had to do, in the first place, was to spread the knowledge of what we proposed, the knowledge of a great organisation which should at the same time lay the basis for an Indian national co-operation and avoid the slightest appearance of menace to the great administration established by England in India. All my coadjutors of every Indian race were penetrated with the conviction that the British Raj was indispensable to the further development of Indian progress and self-knowledge. At the same time, many feared that even well-intentioned expressions on their part might provoke suspicions which men better acquainted with the resources of the English language could avoid. The difficulty was to plant our tree. As soon as it had taken hold of the ground with its roots I did not fear that it would be uprooted. It was resolved that all public



appeals to Indian sentiment must be left to me alone. I had the additional satisfaction of knowing that the immovable complacency of Whitehall regarded me as little better than a visionary, and nothing more inept than visions can be despised by Anglo-Saxon common sense. For a few months I had much to do in seeing the gentlemen who were introduced by Mohun Tagore. They were not many, but they were curious about many things. They had never met before a member of Parliament who knew most things which they wanted to know, and who was willing and anxious to give them the best instruction in his power. I remember receiving a gentleman of the household of his Highness the Maharaja Dhuleep Singh, the dethroned heir of the Sikh kingdom, then eating his heart out in English exile. Mr. Tagore had warned me that the gentleman was entirely trustworthy, but that an atmosphere of exaggeration reigned at the little court of his Highness. I found that the Sikh prince was only a Sikh and entertained a belief that he had only to show himself in the Punjab in order to procure the restoration of the Koh-i-noor and other things. My conversation with the Sikh noble was full of prudent sympathy, and nothing more. After a couple of months deputies began to arrive from India, evidence of the extent of Mohun Tagore's activity and influence. By far the most important of all was the coming of four quiet and courtly gentlemen, only one of whom spoke English with fluency, but all of whom were fairly conversant with its meaning. They were Brahmins of the highest caste, empowered by their highest authorities to visit England without being defiled, and all moved beyond expression by this strange whisper in their ears: 'There can be a Union of Indians which will be legal according to the British law.' One of these illustrious Brahmins appeared to be the Archbrahmin of all. Semi-adoration was paid him. Mr. Tagore stood at a distance to honour him. Mr. Tagore was defiled by residence in England and lax observances. 'These come from the most sacred caste of our priest-princes. They can give

us Western India and the Deccan certainly. They have all the Mahrattas and they always mourn for the Peishwa. He who sent them is the Peishwa, and greater than the Peishwa.' I saw them twice at the Indian Society and also at Mr. Tagore's house. I told Tagore to inform them that I wished to pay them all the honours which I would pay to the highest heads of my own nobility and religion. He told them the history and legend of the O'Donnells. It was a contest of courtesies between us. They were prouder than all the grandees of Old Castile. I explained to them what they wanted to know above all, that the proposed Union was intended to alter nothing but only to unite, to bring Indians together as one nation according to their own laws and customs. Union was all that was wanted. The future would bring reforms. One of the things they explained to me was the terrible impoverishment of the Mahratta population which had followed the destruction of native means of transport by the railways and the destruction of native manufacture by the stimulated importations from Lancashire. Mahratta bullock traffic used to carry everything, but cheap railways, guaranteed against loss out of Indian taxation, had reduced to beggary and famine hundreds of thousands of carriers by road and river and their families, and the cheap cotton brought by the cheap railways had destroyed native industry. 'A million Mahratta homes starved around the deserted looms.' Cold as hate, solemn as vengeance, resolute as death, the Archbrahmin told the whole history. How different from the void hysterics of O'Connell Street.

I was at first surprised at the absence of police supervision over Mr. Tagore during these months. He told me a delicious story. He believed that he was watched by a Mr. Long, a returned missionary, who had formed or forced an entry into his house, and who, he believed, reported regularly to the India Office. Now Mr. Tagore had two daughters, pretty, slender, little toy princesses, who had become Christians in England since their mother's death. It was contrary to Mr. Tagore's

principles to force their consciences. Somehow, at a date which coincided with the beginning of the comings and goings in connexion with the Union of India movement, the Misses Tagore, who were very High Church, communicated to the Rev. Mr. Long the probability of their being attracted towards the Church of Rome. Instantly the anxiety of the reverend man was excited to the pitch of anguish. Two native converts who might inherit thousands of pounds a year, to fall a prey to the Pope of Rome! It was too horrible for contemplation, and the zealous missionary began a war of defence against the wiles of Satan. The young ladies were very sharp disputants. They were severe on the Low Church of which Mr. Long was an apostle. All Mr. Long's visits were now for the unsuspecting victims. He exhorted and he argued. He brought books. He warned Mr. Tagore of the habits of the Pope in the character of a man-eating tiger. 'Long never spies on me now. He is saving the souls and inheritances of my daughters.' The merry old heathen, who was really a philosophic theist, was immensely pleased. The missionary would not have noticed Guy Fawkes and his lanthorn while the expectations of the Misses Tagore were in danger.

The next step was to sound the public opinion of India. When all preparations had been made, my letters began to appear in all columns of the native press in all presidencies and provinces. The happy gods reclined at Simla and Ooty—they were as optimist when they descended to the plains—and regarded with a languid smile the letters of 'that obstructionist fellow' advising the Hindus and Mohammedans to unite! 'What fools those Irish be!' In every quarter of India the native press welcomed my proposals with an enthusiastic unanimity which conveyed no hint to the British Olympians. The organs of Kristodas Pal and Surrendra Nath Banerjee, which expressed the opinion of the ablest Hindus of Bengal, were followed by all the other journals throughout India: *Brahmo Public Opinion*, *Indian Empire*, *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, the *Lahore Tribune*, the *Madras Hindu*, the *Bombay Native Opinion*;



it was a referendum vote in the affirmative. The curious reader can consult the files of the *Voice of India* in the British Museum for the articles of the Indian native press during the spring of 1883. A few extracts will show exactly what I proposed, and will show that my whole programme formed the basis of the Indian Congress in 1884.

The kind of organisation Mr. O'Donnell wishes to be established is on the following basis. He says :—

Firstly.—The most intelligent and distinguished Indians in all parts of India should form an Indian Constitutional Reform Association.

Secondly.—There should be local centres of such Association in the capitals of the provinces and presidencies, consisting of the native gentlemen best qualified to bring forward the grievances of their countrymen.

Thirdly.—There should be a central executive council communicating constantly with the local centres and having a central branch office at the seat of the Imperial Legislature.

In the above extract we have got the constructive basis of an institution which, while it will include every section of the community in its constitution, will give to all its doings a representative character.—*Amrita Bazar Patrika*.

We sanguinely hope that the Indian public will seriously consider the question placed before them by Mr. O'Donnell and lose no time in acting upon his advice. It is for the good of this country that the establishment of such an association is advisable, and no consideration of money or exertions should dissuade the Indian people from giving up the endeavour. It cannot be denied that the rectification of their grievances is not in their hands, but the proper ventilation of them is, we must say, in theirs; and if they do not represent them through proper channels, and consequently do not get any redress, the faults will have to be owned to be on their own side only. It is for this reason, we again say, that our people should seriously consider the question placed before them.—*Hindu*.

The letter speaks for itself; and, but for the circumstance that it has emanated from the pen of Mr. O'Donnell who, from a sheer sense of justice and love of fair play, has of late so disinterestedly placed his time and intelligence at the services of the unrepresented Indians, we would have contented ourselves by simply reproducing the letter, and leaving the reader to

ponder seriously over the momentous suggestion contained therein. Mr. O'Donnell simply repeats the valuable lessons taught by the history of the civilised West, when he says that an agitation of the kind recommended by him is the sure panacea for the evils besetting at the present hour the Government of India. We are disposed to think that should the people of India set to work to carry out the principles laid down by Mr. O'Donnell, they would not only lay the solid foundation of their political regeneration, but will materially help the freedom-loving and freedom-giving English people in the accomplishment of their high and sacred mission in the East.—*Bengalee*.

Mr. F. H. O'Donnell, the member of Parliament for Dun-  
garvan, who has established a fair and just claim to be regarded  
as the member for India, *vice* Professor Fawcett, retired, has  
added another title to his previous claim to the gratitude of  
the Indian people by suggesting the formation, and mainten-  
ance on an efficient scale, of an Indian Constitutional Reform  
Association in London to lend their assistance and co-operation  
to such members of the British Parliament as are disposed or  
anxious to press for the redress of Indian grievances. It may  
be remembered that the East India Association in London  
was originally established, with the help of funds raised among the  
princes and peoples of India, ostensibly in furtherance of the  
same objects which the organisation proposed by Mr. O'Donnell  
is intended to pursue.

But the plan of Mr. O'Donnell seems to us to be more feasible  
than those of the above Association. If all our public bodies  
join hands in the matter, *and Mr. O'Donnell also wants that*  
*they should as far as possible be utilised*, we have not the slightest  
doubt the proposal will be crowned with full success. The  
proposed Association may well be formed of the representatives  
of the various public bodies we have already in India, which  
shall do the duty of Mr. O'Donnell's 'local centres.'—*Patriot*.

The one chief difficulty that may arise in the working of this  
scheme may be that of collecting a sufficiently large sum of  
money to defray the various expenses of it. This may also be  
overcome by each local association undertaking to pay a certain  
sum every year in support of the representative association  
and its branch office in London. We, therefore, see no reason  
why the proposed association should not be formed at once.  
In conclusion, we have to thank Mr. O'Donnell for his kind  
sympathy towards us, and we hope he will always take that



generous interest in our welfare which he is taking now.—*Tribune*.

Mr. O'Donnell's claims to be heard with respect on all questions connected with the affairs of Indian administration will hardly be denied. He bids fair to occupy in time the position of Mr. Fawcett as a friend of India. It is Mr. O'Donnell, and he alone, who, since the accession of Mr. Fawcett to the Cabinet, has always tried to interest the House in matters connected with the administration of this vast dependency. We, therefore, hope the leaders of public opinion in India will give to his proposal the serious attention it deserves.—*Brahmo Public Opinion*.

Of course, these comparisons between Mr. Fawcett and the member for Dungarvan were entirely superficial. Mr. Fawcett acted as a benevolent English trustee of the Indian wards of England. I endeavoured to act as I thought an Indian patriot would act if he possessed my opportunities for exposing wrongs and effecting, or demanding, the redress of grievances. It is superfluous to multiply quotations from the entire native press during the early months of 1883 in which my proposed union of India on a legal and constitutional basis was about to be carried into execution. For the rest, the beautiful harmony of praise which arose from so many journals between Lahore and Madras was usually due to the simple and satisfactory circumstances that the articles and comments were written by affiliates of Mr. Mohun Tagore's committees. Some of these early journalists of the Congress movement were men of remarkable powers. I remember that the editor of the *Hindu* of Madras was quite distinguished for the extent of his information and the acuteness of his suggestions. I received from him four or five times a year lengthy and admirably written letters which were real State papers. The editors of the *Hindu* of Madras and the *Indian Empire* of Calcutta devoted themselves particularly to winning a number of local Indian societies, such as the Indian and British Indian Associations at Calcutta, the Sarvajanic Sabha at Poona, the East India Association at Bombay and their branches. to sink local jealousies in the work of union and to offer



themselves as links in the chain of comradeship which was to bind together all Indian patriots.

We had moved so fast and so quietly that we were able in the spring of 1883 to hold three preliminary meetings of Indians resident in England for the purpose of putting into operation the resolutions of union which were being made in India. I felt that England must be the seat of the movement until it had caught firm hold of the Indian centres of association. When we had our president, secretaries, members of committee, and organising and corresponding secretaries and committees throughout India, it might be too late for bureaucratic interference to check our work. I was careful to have the assistance of a few members of Parliament in our preliminary meetings. Thus we had Mr. Barclay, a Scots member, Mr. C. H. Hopwood, member for Stockport, and afterwards Recorder of Liverpool, another gentleman who now holds a distinguished official position, and Mr. Edmund Leamy, member for Waterford. Leamy was beyond all doubt the orator of most distinction in the later Home Rule party, though continuously kept in the background by men who had their hands on the levers of the machine. He had high honesty, breadth of view, absolute sincerity, and that power of imagination which in a flash brings the core of the situation before the mind of the audience. The stock retailers of commonplace, the Sextons, O'Connors, Dillons, could reel you off by the yard the same old chant without a suggestion of constructive ability in a furlong of it. Leamy had a pure and stately strenuousness of diction which recalled John Bright. After Parnell's Kilmainham compact with Gladstone the paralysis which followed for the Parliamentary party affected Leamy with pain and disgust. He used to say that the party gospel now was: 'Open your mouth and shut your eyes and see what Mr. Gladstone will send you.' He declined to consider the violent demonstrations of the plan-of-campaigners as an equivalent for the lost independence of thought and movement. He remained faithful to Parnell when Gladstone issued

the order of deposition, and was included in the general anathema launched by the clergy against the Parnellites. Deprived of the high hopes with which he had entered public life, he was unable to struggle against the sea of ills. His generous spirit had from the first sympathised with my reforming policy for India. At one of our meetings, attended by very many Indians, I asked him to speak on patriotism, but with discretion. He delivered a sort of review of heroic deeds which cannot have been excelled by that famous gem of martial eloquence, Meagher's panegyric of the Sword.

When we had satisfied ourselves that all preparations were complete, the formal constitution of the Constitutional Association of India took place at Mr. Mohun Tagore's house. The large drawing-rooms, thrown into one hall, were richly hung and carpeted with precious stuffs out of the Tagore treasures. Above the chairman's seat was a magnificent tapestry of silk and gold and colours representing the emblematic bird, the phoenix-peacock of Hindustan. A dark banner was said to have come from the heirlooms of the Peishwa, and had waved above a hundred thousand charging horsemen. On a table covered with cloth of gold was caked earth from five Indian lands, and a tall urn of gold and crystal which held the water of a sacred river. On the eastern wall a jewelled crescent surmounted the imperial cognisance of Akhbar.

As a prelude to the assembly on which so much was to depend, and for which the favour of Heaven was invited, there came the wailing peal of temple trumpets of the great conch kind, while a hymn to Sri Barata, the divinisation of the Indian Motherland, was sung by a hidden choir. This invocation, at least for a couple of verses, may be given in this rough translation according to the version which was made for me.

Sri Barata ! Thou All-Divine !

Sri Barata ! Thou Only Great !

Our souls, our lives, are Thine, but Thine ;

Our lives, our deeds, Thy Service wait.

Thy mountains are the Thrones of God,  
Thy streams before His Feet are poured ;  
His Presence fills both cloud and clod,  
Thy lightning flashes from His Sword.

There were other stanzas of a more secular than religious tendency. I was also told that the utmost care was taken to use no expressions, ritual or religious, which might bring forward the polytheistic side of Hindu worship, so as to avoid any offence to the Mohammedan adorers of the Divine Unity. Mohun Tagore, belonging to a Brahmin family which had been compromised by alleged leanings to Islam in past centuries, was now inclined to continue the conciliatory traditions of his race. The essential identity of Brahma, Allah, and God was his central creed.

Mohun Tagore was in the chair. On seats beside him were, on the one hand, the Archbrahmin, on the other a Mohammedan baron and landed proprietor. There were 250 gentlemen present, all Indians except myself. The strictest loyalty to the British Raj combined with warm and practical love of India to direct all the proceedings. As every Indian appeared to be wearing a turban or other native head-dress, the scene was very striking and picturesque. There were half a dozen speakers, mostly in English. It was resolved to found the Constitutional Association of India to unite all Indians for mutual alliance in the pacific development and reform of India, with a central council in India, branches throughout the provinces and states, and a representative committee in London to be the centre of the Indian sojourners in England and to supply information to the friends of India in Parliament. A Mr. Sen, who was the first hon. secretary, made an admirable statement to show how the strength of British rule in India allowed Indians to devote themselves to internal reforms without apprehension of wars or revolutions. I was asked to speak on behalf of a proposal which had been arranged among the managers of the new movement. I addressed the meeting to this effect : ' Mr. Mohun Tagore, noble gentlemen and gentlemen,—



We have effected to-night a great and pacific revolution, which will be a turning-point in the history of the Indian nations. We have proclaimed the brotherhood of mutual helpfulness among all Indians who love their country, no matter what may be their caste or creed. Our purpose is to form a great parliament of Indians who will be representative of all parts of India. Gentlemen, we are in these rooms a representative parliament of India already. I ask our chairman to call upon the members of the various nations, provinces, and states represented in this great meeting of 300 Indian visitors or residents, to declare themselves, each body in turn, so that all may see the representative character of our assembly.'

Here Mr. Mohun Tagore rose up and began asking, now the Bengalis, now the Madrassis, now the visitors from Bombay, from the Punjab, from the Deccan, from Oudh, from Rajputana, from every part of India, to stand up and allow themselves to be counted. There were 100 Bengalis and Beharese, 60 Bombay Indians, 30 from Upper India, so many from the central provinces, so many from this and that native state. It was all very wonderful, and the dusky throng grew enthusiastic, and more enthusiastic, as they realised that the whole of India was, indeed, gathered in a parliament there that night. I continued, according to the arrangement: 'You see that I did not err, and that we are representative of the whole of the Indian nation in an un hoped and extraordinary degree. We have constituted ourselves the Constitutional Association of India, and we have now the proof that we are nothing less than this. The first thing which we have to do in our corporate and individual capacity is to communicate what has taken place to our distant constituents, to our relatives and friends with whom we can speak with confidence and trust. If every man present here to-night will engage within the next fortnight to write to only ten friends and acquaintances, within a very few weeks what we have done to-night will be known to 3000 sources of information and centres of sympathy from one side of

India to the other. That will be easy to do, will you resolve and promise to do it ? ' With enthusiasm the whole meeting promised. The idea was welcome to every man. It was better than mere newspaper articles and official notices. Articles and notices would follow, but personal communication with personal friends appealed to the family and local feeling which is strong in every Indian. ' And will you ask your friends to write back to you, and to tell you what they have been doing to spread the intelligence and to promote the cause ? We can have another meeting in a couple of months in order to learn the answer.' This proposal was also welcomed with the warmest approval.

As a matter of fact, there was a constant stream of letters kept up for many months to all parts of India. The residents and visitors entered with the utmost interest into this undertaking, which at the same time gave them the sense of communicating important news and of laying broad and wide the foundations of the Constitutional Association, which was to afford a ground of united patriotism for their country. Perhaps the courteous reader will allow my modesty to remark that the foregoing sketch of my observations quite fails to express a great many of the matters which I introduced to stimulate and convince my remarkable audience. Standing there with the traditional and picturesque symbol of Hindustan glowing in colours and gold to my left as I turned to the assembly, and behind and above me the dark and menacing banner of the Mahratta confederacy of old, how could I fail to be moved with no common emotion as I looked into the eyes of those chosen ministers who had been sent to aid my work, and saw the eager mass of the turbaned students filling up the background ; young, unknown men, despised of the India Office, but holding at the point of their pens the communication between my thoughts and numberless allies among hundreds of millions ? This was another auditory from the bucolic pillars of the Farmers' Alliance, from the frothy declaimers who are dear to decadent Dublin and the ex-Irish of New York. I knew that it



was national pride which had suffered most by the treatment which angered them, and I did homage to their national pride. I spoke of the early civilisation of India, precursor of the Roman and the Hellene; of the echoes of famous philosophies and famous wars which had come across the ages; the sun-born kings and princes; the viceroys of Akhbar, and the lightning stroke of Sivaji; of the need of owning as a common inheritance the rival glories of the valiant and the great of a former time. I saw my words reflected in the answering look of Moslem and Hindu, keen Bengali and untamed Mahratta. And England the governing state had not understood this elementary science of power! Long years before I would have invited the plenipotentiaries of Indian kings to the benches of English princes in the House of Lords. So would Benjamin, Earl of Beaconsfield. D'Israeli and O'Donnell! The Semite and the Celt! But all statesmanship, every impulse of Empire which was not an emanation of Philistia, were hopeless and vain against the sufficiency of Balliol and the impenetrable platitude of Manchester. We had several meetings of the Constitutional Association of India during the twelvemonth that followed, but the august presences had returned to palaces and sanctuaries at Lahore and Benares, Poona and Satara, Calcutta and Haiderabad. Three thousand, six thousand, letters every month carried my counsels into every town and townlet, into every court-house and durbar hall of fifty states and provinces.<sup>1</sup> Within eighteen months the Constitutional

<sup>1</sup> Among the innumerable letters of support and congratulation which I received from all kinds of Indian leaders of opinion, I quote the opening words of a note from Mr. Kristodas Pal: 'All India joins in gratitude for the service you have done.'

At the same time, Mr. Mitra, the London editor of the *Bengalee* of Calcutta, the journal of the influential Mr. Surendra Nath Banerjee, sent me a letter from that Bengal leader, which attests in the highest degree the anxiety of Mr. S. N. Banerjee to unite all possible leaders and chiefs in support of the Constitutional Association. 'My dear Mr. Mitra,—I have read your letter with much interest. You will find from the *Bengalee*, which I send you by this post, that I suggest that the Indian Society of London should take up the work which Mr. O'Donnell proposes for the Constitutional Association; and I have written a letter this mail to his Highness the Raja Rampal Singh to that effect. I hope you, too, will use your influence with the Raja and with the members of



Association of India had become the Indian National Congress. Never, never, shall the work of Ganendra Mohun Tagore be uprooted or undone.

But Downing Street had combined with Oxford and Cambridge to eliminate all Irish influence from the future of the Indian Empire! Which is a great achievement, when you come to think of it!

### PANDEMOCRACY IN ENGLAND

After it had been given to me to co-operate in this way in the national unification of India, I became engrossed for many years in Continental questions. I could give no more than a word of commiseration and unmarked advice when that treacherous gust whirled away into the exterior darkness poor, thankless, thoughtless, haughty Parnell's crown of tinsel. The war against the Boers was raging before very long, and another discrowned chief—this one of sterner stuff—was breaking his fierce old heart in European exile, far from his stubborn Republicans, when it occurred to me that the time was come when I could usefully reform the programme of the Liberal party. Twenty years had passed since I countered Lord Beaconsfield's appeal for the coercion of Ireland by leading the old guard of the Tory counties in rebellion against the squires. It is possible that the courteous reader who remembers my engagement, at an early page of this history, to bring Irish intervention into the heart of British politics, will not reject beforehand my assurance that I was about to renew the operation. I had two powerful motives for action. In the first place, I was pledged to do what I could for the restoration of substantial freedom and the Indian Society to induce them to aid the work. Be so kind as to write to me by return of post as to what you have been able to do with regard to the suggestions I make in this letter. I remain yours,

'SURENDRA NATH BANERJEE.'

Mr. S. N. Banerjee was naturally attracted by the scrupulous legality and constitutionalism of my undertaking. As a matter of fact, both the Indian Society of London and his Highness the Raja Rampal Singh were untiring in support of the Constitutional Association of India.

independence to my ancient friends in the Transvaal, and in the second place I wanted a certain electoral reform from English Liberals which, as it seemed to me, no other political party would apply to Ireland. My intervention was again for the sake of Ireland.

This time I determined to reinforce the democratic wing of Liberalism to such an extent that Liberalism would be no longer that discreet blend of progress and afterthoughts which shaded imperceptibly through Whiggery into a Conservative inertia exceeding the finest product of the Carlton Club. I hoped that a democratised Liberalism would reverse the policy of Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Milner in South Africa. I hoped that it would establish the payment of election expenses by the State, which was, and is, the last plank of salvation for Irish constituencies swamped by the collections of Mr. Redmond's parliamentarian tourists in America and the reverend clergy of the League in the parochial branches at home. I determined to found the National Democratic League of Great Britain. The courteous reader is invited to note this official list of the governing body of the National Democratic League of Great Britain for the year 1905—the year before the Liberal return. It will show that I succeeded in the foundation, at any rate. It will also show that I had assembled on the governing body of the League quite a notable combination of the very best innovating and agitating ability which was anywhere disposable within the four corners of Britain.

*'Government of the People, by the People, for the People.'*

## NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC LEAGUE,

SESSION OF 1905.

HEAD OFFICE : 57 & 58 CHANCERY LANE.

TELEPHONE : 2031 HOLBORN.

OBJECTS.—(a) Adult suffrage; (b) Automatic registration with a three months' qualification; (c) One man one vote; (d) Official expenses of Elections to be defrayed from State funds; (e) Second ballot; (f) Payment of members; (g) Extinction of the hereditary principle in the legislature.

*President*, Frank Hugh O'Donnell; *Chairman of the League*, Ald. W. Everitt; *Vice-presidents*, W. M. Thompson (*Barrister-at-Law*, *Editor 'Reynolds's Newspaper'*), D. Lloyd-George, M.P., Chas. Fenwick, M.P., T. J. Macnamara, M.P., LL.D., T. Lough, M.P., A. Jacoby, M.P., A. Worsley, E. H. Pickersgill, B.A., George Howell, Sir E. Verney, E. A. Cornwall, L.C.C., W. C. Steadman, L.C.C., W. B. Bawn, L.C.C., B. S. Strauss, L.C.C., Sam Woods (*Secretary Parliamentary Committee Trades Union Congress*); *Executive Council*, H. Bacon, D. Barrett, H. Burrell, A. Carr, Ald. Geo. Dew, L.C.C., J. E. Dobson, Col. Fitzpatrick, F. Frye, Mrs. G. Goodall, G. Moffatt, A. J. Marriott, John O'Connor (*Barrister-at-Law*), J. G. Osborne, H. Plowright, H. Rylett (*Editor of 'New Age'*), W. Stevenson (*General Secretary B.L. Union*), J. J. Schneider, John Ward (*General Secretary N.B.L. & G.L.U.*), A. Watt, E. Wright; *Honorary Treasurer*, A. Carter; *Honorary Secretary*, Richard Parker.

How little the world knows of its greatest men! Here was I promoting, utilising, training up for their high destinies Chancellors of the Exchequer, Cabinet Ministers, knights of the London County Council, all manner of big and little fry of government; and not even a coronet of radical strawberry leaves has as yet rewarded my prescient selections. I must have been the mascot of the Liberal party. Seriously speaking, the National Democratic League had attracted to itself from the outset all kinds of the most earnest convictions and most distinguished talents among the Liberal politicians, who had been so long in the chilly side of futile opposition. The principal, the most grateful, thanks of Democratic Liberalism for the new platform and the new organisation are due to the late Mr. W. M. Thompson—also an Irishman from Ulster—editor of the ultra-popular *Reynolds's Newspaper*, who became the first president of the National Democratic League, and who was its chief founder by the influence of his democratic paper and by his own eloquent and indefatigable activity. As soon as I laid the proposition of such a league before him, he welcomed it as an idea which had been long his own; and when I placed £300 in his hands to cover the initial expenses of foundation and organisation, he declared at once that the very moment had come for an association which would unite all sections of the English democracy, at least sufficiently long to enable



them to make head against the Conservative domination which had just renewed its lease of power at the elections of 1900. Mr. W. M. Thompson was a man of scrupulous integrity, and he insisted on giving me an account of every item of expenditure which had been defrayed by my £300, and I hold his accounts in safe keeping. The hire of the great King's Hall of the Holborn Restaurant for the foundation conference was the least part of the outlay, which included an immense mass of circulars, the expenses of clerks, and all the other machinery necessary for communication with every conspicuous democrat and advanced Liberal in England, Wales, and Scotland. I did not trouble myself about Ireland, as the pressure of the Dublin Tammany rendered intelligent freedom of action a hopeless aspiration. I did not even miss it. At the foundation conference in October 1900, there were more than 1500 delegates and guests from every centre of advanced Liberalism from one end of the kingdom to the other; from Mr. John Burns to Mr. John Ward, from Mr. George Howell to Mr. Steadman, and from Mr. Byles to Mr. Hemmerde. I have been told that upwards of 150 members of the National Democratic Conference of 1900 became members of Parliament after the General Election of 1906. As may be seen from the foregoing programme of objects of the League, Mr. Lloyd-George as Chancellor of the Exchequer is only continuing the war against hereditary legislators which was proclaimed at the conference of the League. I may frankly state that I did not care many twopences what principles the conference chose to proclaim, so long as the payment of election expenses by the State was made a plank of the platform. With the reader's permission I will drop the League programme on all other points, and relate some vicissitudes of the election expenses reform which go to the centre of the Irish parliamentary question, in relation to which the whole of this book has been framed. I add merely that the League shortly numbered 360 branches throughout Great Britain, that it formed a rallying-ground for all kinds of divided and

disheartened Liberals and Radicals, and it seems to have swept the constituencies subsequently with a wave of victory. Of course, there were plenty of other causes concurrent with the National Democratic League. As the Liberal restoration asserted itself, all kinds of fresh movements arose, and all kinds of fresh shibboleths were shouted. We had not mentioned Chinese slavery in the Transvaal, for instance, but it was heard from our platforms with increasing lucidity and confidence. We became the ladder of ascent for many successful persons who never heard of us, after they had mounted high enough.

The inclusion of State payment of election expenses in the programme of the League was my supreme interest as an Irishman; and in the opening years of the Liberal Cabinet of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman this reform, united with the payment of salaries for legislative attendance, was approved by enormous majorities of the new House of Commons. Then it stuck. Its warmest advocates were, of course, the Labour members and the Parliamentary party from Ireland, in their character of special representatives of liberty and merit among the non-capitalist majority of the electorate. Its warmest advocates were also its most deadly and hypocritical enemies. Though the Whigs and Tories were to unite in enthusiastic conversion on behalf of the State payment of election expenses, the Labour party and the Irish party would be instructed somehow or other to put a knife in the back of that special reform. Here we have the core and centre of a new difficulty of popular representation. The famous hate of gilded tyrants and perfumed nobles for popular liberty is a pale and faded abstraction compared with the positive fury which fills the managers of a democratic electoral machine at the appearance anywhere on the horizon of any reform which threatens to diminish the dependence of the people on the machine. Trade-union secretaries and trade-congress orators early objected to the facilitation of independent candidatures which were involved in the State payment of expenses and

representatives. The hold which the pay-chest gave them upon the selection of workmen candidates would disappear with universal abrogation of the expenses difficulty. A body of poor electors, discontented with the bosses, could run a man of their own, if his expenses could be met by the State, as a necessary item in a real consultation of national suffrage. It was resolved, accordingly, to vote for the reform as a pious opinion, but to let the Government know that there was nothing in it. Of course, the official tradition of the Conservative parties has stolidly failed to perceive that 'the bar of gold' no longer keeps out the mere delegate of a wealthy machine, but is only fatal to free opinion.

#### MECHANISM OF THE IRISH TAMMANY

The power of selecting the candidate and controlling the constituency which the trade-union levy on the members of the union gave the Labour party managers by possession of the pay-chest, is similarly given to the Irish Tammany by the parochial subscriptions garnered by the clergy, and the American subscriptions garnered by the peripatetic orators who bear the collecting hat through the public meetings of Irish America. The object and the result are exactly the same in the two cases. The managers seek to accumulate a fund or treasury which can support the expenses of elections for the party candidates, and they use this fund with the utmost absence of scruple to prevent the success of other candidates, however popular or deserving. Mr. Redmond or Mr. T. P. O'Connor does not tour America to raise money for enabling Irish constituencies to elect candidates of their own selection and preference. On the contrary. The money is for the machine candidate, and if the popular candidate is hindered by lack of money, so much the better. The Irish Americans supply dollars to force the candidates of the League directory on the constituencies, and not to aid the constituencies to elect any other candidates whatever. As a result, the Irish constituencies have not had a general election of a freely



popular character since Isaac Butt saw his Home Rule party elected by the ballot, and without the machine or the boss, in the year 1874. For more than a third of a century there has not been a free and equal election in Ireland. It has always been since thirty-six years ago the thin and light purse of a few individuals against the subsidised nominees of a central directory equipped and endowed with American money. The supplies of American money are far, far less to-day than in the palmy days of the Land League. It may be doubted if Mr. T. P. O'Connor has brought in cheques and promises together as much as £10,000. Mr. Patrick Egan used to receive ten or twenty times the amount. If the collections by the League priests amount to £10,000, it is a liberal estimate. On the other hand, when members of Parliament can be obtained for the wages of barber's clerks or thereabout, the cost of the items who can be sent to vote according to instructions in the Westminster lobbies cannot be described as excessive. Election expenses are small on the side of the present League in consequence of the great amount of volunteer agency of the most effective kind which is supplied by the clergy and their retainers.

The supreme authority of the parliamentary and electoral machine in Ireland is the national directory, which would be more accurately entitled the central directory, as it has nothing national about it, being as one-sided and factional as such things can be. This central directory consists of members of Parliament, who are all now chosen by the clergy, and a number of lay and clerical delegates from the provinces. The lay delegates do not appear to include a single name which is known outside of a local circle, except so far as membership of the central directory may be a guarantee for culture and distinction. The clerical delegates, who are perfectly qualified to manage the business of the directory without assistance, include several of the ablest and most influential clergymen in Ireland. They stand between the rural masses of electors and the serene summits of the Episcopate, whence descend

the inspirations which the clerical delegates bring to realisation. I find the following names of these all-important personages, the preponderant partners of the directory, mentioned at the special meeting which arranged the recent campaign of the Parliamentary party on the basis of the agitation for the abolition of the House of Lords. Of unstained character, of immense influence, of practised dexterity in the work of electioneering, these reverend and very reverend gentlemen are as supreme in contemporary Irish politics as the supreme council in the Venetian Republic. More completely dominant, if possible, for they are controlled by no national tradition even. They serve according to their deepest convictions a cause which transcends the obligations of citizenship and scorns the limitations of patriotism. 'What is good for the Church?' is the dominant care of those exemplary and masterful churchmen. I take their names from the *Freeman's Journal* :—Very Rev. Canon Quinn, P.P., Vicar-General, South Armagh; Rev. John Garry, P.P., East Clare; Very Rev. Canon MacFadden, P.P., Vicar Forane, West Donegal; Rev. Andrew Lowry, C.C., South Down; Rev. Philip McGinnity, P.P., South Fermanagh; Rev. John Power, P.P., East Limerick; Rev. Felix MacKenna, P.P., North Monaghan; Right Rev. Monsignor McGlynn, P.P., Vicar-General, Donegal; Very Rev. Canon McCarten, P.P., Antrim; Rev. James Brennan, P.P., South Kilkenny; Very Rev. Canon Furlong, P.P., Vicar Forane, South Wexford; Rev. M. B. Kennedy, C.C., North-East Cork.

Mr. Redmond, Mr. Dillon, Mr. T. P. O'Connor—notwithstanding the arch-episcopal patrons of their collecting hat—are perfectly insignificant and shadowy names in comparison with this august and irresponsible directorate above the directory.

The dignitaries of the United Irish League, like the rabid curates of the Land League, must take some strain of political and agrarian passion from the fact of having intruded into the direction of a political and agrarian revolution. The venerable directors of the central directory

cannot evade this necessary law, even if they were willing to evade it, which has not been demonstrated. In a very noble pastoral letter recently published by a French archbishop, it is laid down—somewhat late in the day—that nothing injures the impartial mission of ministers of the gospel so much as complicity on the one side or the other in the contests of politics. The priest who has attacked and denounced members of his flock from a political platform in the afternoon, cannot expect to receive the attention due to the common father of his people when he addresses his congregation from the pulpit next morning. The priest who is the most applauded orator of party meetings cannot be the detached and spiritual preacher of the gospel a few hours afterwards. The coarser minds in the congregation may not so quickly perceive or condemn the deterioration. The finest intelligences will be already disgusted and repelled at an earlier stage. The minister of religion who elects to be a popular incendiary, like the minister of religion who elects to be a subservient courtier, inevitably loses the special influence of the preacher of Christ. An Irish peasant, surrounded by the restraints and traditions of the local religion, may continue to fulfil its outward obligations, even with little interior comprehension, until he crosses the Atlantic. But the canker has already eaten into the heart of piety; and American bishops and missionaries deplore the practical apostasy of two-thirds or three-quarters of the Irish immigration. The Reverend Jack Cade will never go down to posterity as an apostle of souls.

It may be freely granted that it has been comparatively easy for the Irish Catholic clergy to obtain the political ascendancy which they monopolise to-day. Overwhelming argument, as it is, of the unfitness of the contemporary Irish for the manly duties of self-government, it is sadly true that the absence of a governing class, aggravated by the absence of popular education, make the rule of the priest almost a legitimate product of the situation. These two supreme evils of British misrule in Ireland, the alienation



of the Irish gentry from the interests and responsibilities of patriotism, and the mutilation of the popular intelligence by the vilest system of uneducation to be found to-day in Western civilisation, have undoubtedly produced a general incapacity for the exercise of civic and national authority among the laity; which, even if there were no Government pressure in the same direction, would almost certainly produce a clerical ascendancy. Though the general education of the Irish Catholic clergy be inferior, though the culture of Maynooth has been described by no less an authority than the Catholic Bishop O'Dwyer of Limerick as 'nothing that can be called culture in fact,' nevertheless the clergy do possess advantages—in their training which imparts a knowledge of divine and human matters of supreme moment, in the severe discipline which presides over their education, and in the powerful bond of comradeship and subordination which conducts them like an army in occupation—and these qualities of the sacerdotal profession, united to comparative freedom from material cares and anxieties, make the priests in a country so depressed and degraded as Ireland a natural aristocracy in a political sense as well. Of course, they might conceivably disdain to accept the temporal fruit of such a superiority in such circumstances. They might conceivably use their power to promote, and never to repress, any lay capacity for leadership and administration which might become visible here and there. But there is human nature even in ministers of religion. And we have again the British Government—always the British Government—moved by the sole preoccupation for votes, votes, votes, heaping upon the clerical masters of votes every possible kind of ascendancy in every possible kind of department which can be influenced by government favour or government power. It was the British Government which placed the millions of the Congested Districts Board under the administration of bishops and clergymen. It was the British Government which sent round to the bishops to know who it was that their lordships desired to be made

Justices of the Peace. It was the British Government which broke up in Ireland the system of united university education enjoyed by a hundred and fifty millions of orthodox Catholics elsewhere in Europe. It was the British Government which excluded the graduate body of the new 'National' University from all share or participation in its governing senate. It was the British Government which directly nominated all the nominees of the clergy on the University Senate instead. It was the British Government which handed over intermediate education to those ecclesiastical 'money-making machines,' in the words of Mr. Birrell, which Bishop O'Dwyer denounced as the ruin of their unhappy pupils. It is the British Government which for more than seventy years already has maintained the primary education of Ireland at the lowest level in Europe, merely for the sake of maintaining the schoolmasters as sub-sacristans of the parochial clergy. If the Irish Catholic clergy have yielded to the temptation of autocracy and monopoly which the British Government pressed upon them, at least we must remember, while deploring the general paralysis of lay enterprise and manhood which have succeeded, that the main purpose of those intrusive priests has been the promotion of the Church, for which they would die, and which they justly hold to be the most valuable possession of a nation. Unfortunately they forget, or they have never learned, that there are lay rights and lay essentials of character and conduct, which can only be ignored to the certain injury of true religion as well as national honour and prosperity. As I heard an American priest of Irish descent say in a company of several of his compatriots: 'The devotion of the clergy in Ireland to political and secular affairs has cost the Church in America millions of Irish souls, uneducated and uninstructed in the mysteries of their religion and the foundation of their faith.' Who can ever say what Ireland has lost in material prosperity from the persistent prevention of national union and co-operation which has resulted from the supremacy of the sectarian element?

## A CRIME AGAINST THE CONSTITUTION

It is a strange and characteristic fact that all pseudo-representations and pseudo-conventions which have taken the place of the real people of Ireland for so large a part of a century were the adulterated result of one of the greatest successes of Mr. Butt's party. It was in the year 1879 that the Home Rule party, just on the eve of its supersession by the American dollars, obtained the repeal of that Act of the old Irish Parliament which was passed in the crisis of French wars and domestic conspiracies to prevent a rebel assembly from constituting itself in face of the Irish authorities. This old Act was known as the Irish Convention Act, and prohibited all elected and representative assemblies with the exception of the Irish Parliament itself. After the Act of Union this prohibition was held to extend to every effort to summon assemblies of representatives of the Catholics and other bodies who had grievances to remove. By the Act, chapter 28, 42 and 43 of Victoria, this difficulty was henceforth removed, and it became free to the Irish to choose elective assemblies to represent them upon any subject of passing or permanent importance. At the same time it was strictly provided by the repealing Act, that no person shall undertake, under penalty of fine or imprisonment, 'to take part either as elector, candidate, or representative, in the election or proceedings of any assembly which shall propose to take, or shall take upon itself, the functions of any House of Parliament, or have for its object or tendency to bring Parliament into contempt.' It would appear in the sequel that the conventions and directories of the Land League and its successors have come well within the boundary of prohibition and unconstitutionality. They have usurped the fundamental function of every House of Commons in the world by substituting their permanent dictation for the free action of responsible members of Parliament; and they have brought all Parliament, and the British Parliament in particular, into open contempt by appending



unconstitutional conditions to the election of the representative and the discharge of parliamentary functions by the representative, which absolutely destroy the very meaning and object of representative government and institutions. Ireland has not only been deprived of its Irish Parliament, but is excluded and inhibited from the free exercise of representative rights in the Union Parliament! An irresponsible conspiracy, which does not hesitate to threaten coercion to men and brutality to beasts, is armed by irresponsible and extern paymasters with the capital to hire adherents and to organise dictation. It substitutes clubs and branches for the constituencies. It substitutes the watched voting of packed and sorted conventions for the vote by ballot of free electors. It substitutes a pledge to obey a factious majority for the absolute obligation to legislate according to conscience which the constitution imposes upon every representative in Parliament. It pays a salary to the member of Parliament, who sells principle for pelf. It accumulates every obstacle of expense and hostility in the way of every honourable candidate. It repudiates and prohibits the responsibility of the legislator to the country, and substitutes blind subservience to itself.

Constitutional parties have a perfect right to express opinion, to arouse opinion. They have no right, and they cease to be constitutional the instant that they claim to have the right, to interfere in the smallest degree with the absolute freedom of every member of a constitutional party to attend every electoral convention of his party, the absolute freedom of every member of a constituency to vote for the candidate of his personal choice, the absolute right of every representative of a constituency to vote and speak in the house of representatives according to his conscientious duty to the country, and according to no other duty, pledge, promise, or pretension whatsoever. Agrarian party, labour party, national party, or any other party, must observe these liberties, or must remain outside the constitution so long as they act, or claim to act, against

the very life and vital elements of the constitution. The reform and the sanction would be easy and would be unanimously popular. They are the universal interest of the citizen body. Outside of a few hundred vile and venal persons, in the whole of the three kingdoms there would be nothing but approval. A few labour agitators who want to enslave labour, a good many Irish agitators who have enslaved Ireland, a few traffickers for votes in some whips' offices—there is the sum-total of the forces interested in the perpetuation of the meanest and most dangerous form of public crime. The machine of the labour parties, the machine of the Irish agrarian parties, the machines of other parties according to their opportunities, have applied to the constituencies and electorates the methods of the Standard Oil Company for the limitation and control of production, transport, and sale in the United States. In the important case—the most important within living memory—which recently came before the House of Lords on the question of the compulsory levy of trade-union contributions towards the keep of members of Parliament in the pay of labour political machines, Lord James of Hereford used in reference to those payments and those members words which apply exactly to the Irish Parliamentary situation at the present day. With the permission of the reader I will exactly repeat Lord James's remarks, only substituting the name of the Irish miscreation for the organisation named by the British law lord.

A member of the League is compelled to contribute to the support of a member of Parliament who is compelled to answer the whip of the League party. The member of Parliament undertakes to forgo his own judgment and to vote in Parliament in accordance with the opinions of some person or persons acting on behalf of the League.

What is this but the destruction of democracy as well as the destruction of the constitution? In the words of another law lord, the Scots Lord Shaw of Dunfermline, there is this further description which I apply similarly

to the kept members of the Irish League or rather the League in Ireland.

The position of a member of Parliament supported by the contributions of the League is accordingly this. He is by the League's rules responsible to, as well as paid by, the League. He must as a candidate have signed and accepted the conditions of the League party. While the League party has its own policy he must accept its constitution and 'agree to abide' by the decisions of the League Parliamentary party in carrying out its aims. Should his views as to right and wrong on a public issue as to the true line of service to the realm, as to the real interests of the constituency which elected him, differ from the decision of the Parliamentary party, he has contracted to place his vote and action as in subjection not to his own convictions but to their decisions.

It is superfluous to add that such a contract-slavery, such an indentured Chinese labour, is wholly incompatible with the very idea of representative government itself. The repulsion and loathing in all classes of the Irish nation against such a system are universal, outside the immediate organisation of the contract-slaves and their drivers and keepers. Priests are forced by the voice of their own consciences to protest against the whole infamy. At the League convention for the making of a League candidate for Mid Tyrone at the late election, a parish priest, Rev. Father Donnelly of Carrickmore—one of the most respected and religious clergymen of Armagh arch-diocese—in supporting a respectable candidate, said literally, 'that he was an independent man who had never received pay from the party funds like so many of the carpet-baggers who were members of the party.' When people blame the participation of the Irish Catholic clergy in those electioneering scenes, it is forgotten very often that the clergy—having grave interests at stake which are to them supreme—feel themselves obliged to struggle for the control of the machine, so long as the neglect or complicity of the responsible government maintains the machine.

I have now brought this history of the decline and



degradation of the Irish Parliamentary representation at Westminster to a close. I have related that history in detail for five-and-twenty years, from the inauguration of the Home Rule movement by Mr. Isaac Butt to the final collapse of Mr. Gladstone's substitutes for the Home Rule programme in 1893, followed by the predominant partnership of Lord Rosebery. The subsequent fifteen years down to the present day, during which the American dollar has continued, though under different auspices and in niggardly volume, to prevent the revival of free institutions in the electorate or the Parliamentary party, have been described with less elaboration. In theory the system has been the same under the Dillons and Redmonds as under the Egans and Parnells. In practice the ludicrous and merely injurious has been largely substituted for the terror and destruction which filled Ireland from the foundation of the Land League to the Parnell Commission. In the matter of the tyrannical interference with individual liberty in the sphere of politics and education at least, there has been little to choose between the two divisions of a despotic epoch. From the year 1879, when the Land League began, no general election has been permitted to test fairly the opinion of the country. The central directory admits or excludes the local branches, always excluding on some pretext any branch which may harbour opposition to the directory. The local branches, thus docked and supervised, send to the local convention the delegates who will support the men in power. No candidate has a chance of success unless he pledges himself beforehand to accept the decision of the convention. A list of names is presented to the convention, and the clergy and the prepared delegates vote for the candidate who will be the most pliant supporter of the omnipotence of the central directory. As the directory will support with American and parochial money the choice of the convention, and as no private person in most of the constituencies will risk his purse against the lay agitators backed by all the altar-denunciations in the district, there are very seldom any

contests at the polls. The rigged convention, supported by the clergy and the pay-chest, takes the place of the constituency, and another nominal member of Parliament goes to Westminster pledged beforehand not to vote and speak according to his conscience for the benefit of the country, but to vote and speak according to his orders. The phrase 'the decision of the majority of the party' is employed to cover the nakedness of brutal reality. As the majority of the party—the poor-box majority—consists of poor devils to whom the loss of their hire of £3 a week would be destitution, and who, besides, have no conception of what is or is not good for the country, 'the decision of the majority' is always the decision of the pay-chest. Rotten to the core as the whole process is, illegal and criminal as it is, according to the entire law and tradition of representative government in these countries, it has not suited the convenience of the speculators in votes on the two front benches to remove the rottenness or to vindicate the constitution. Ireland is full of men of considerable ability, of considerable patriotism, of considerable honesty and honour. If the rights of constituencies were defended by the law instead of being betrayed by the law-makers, if the rigged convention, the pre-contract, and the hire of representatives by private organisations were absolutely forbidden under summary and sharp penalties, you could have an Irish Parliamentary party. While the complicity of the legislature in the degradation of the legislators continues, you will only have a Parliamentary party from Ireland.

Mr. T. P. O'Connor, the member of the Parliamentary party who most resembles O'Connell in the type of oratory as well as in physical and political characteristics, assured the Liverpool crowd on his return with £10,000 from America 'contributed with the warm support of the Archbishops of New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and St. Louis,' as he informed a representative of the *Times*, that 'the Land League had found Ireland a nation of beggars,' while now that happy land was a rival of the biblical regions

which flowed with milk and honey. Mr. T. P. O'Connor did not explain from his triumphal vehicle, 'surrounded by torch-bearers,' how the Ireland which had grown so prosperous and rich in the last thirty years had allowed him to go begging the Irish helps of half the United States to pay the £3 a week of his distinguished colleagues. But a few statistics extracted from 'Thom's Directory'—a more trustworthy authority than the directory of the League—will supply the explanations prudently omitted by the successful collector of small contributions. It is easy to compare how Ireland stood in 1880 and thirty years subsequently : (1) as regards population ; and (2) as regards area of crops.

## (1) POPULATION

In 1881.	In 1908.
5,174,000 persons.	4,360,000 persons.

## (2) ACREAGE UNDER CROPS

	In 1884.	In 1907.
Cereal crops ..	1,600,000 acres.	1,250,000 acres.
Green crops ..	1,221,000 acres.	1,002,000 acres.

In other words, during Mr. T. P. O'Connor's period of unexampled prosperity due to the Land League, as narrated to the faithful helps of the United States, the population of Ireland has diminished by 800,000 persons. In the same period of exceeding prosperity, during which a nation of beggars has been transformed into the wealthy and productive cattle-drivers of to-day, the acreage under cereals has diminished by 350,000 acres, and the acreage under green crops has diminished by 220,000 acres. During Mr. T. P. O'Connor's golden age of American collection and picturesque reporting, Ireland has lost 800,000 men, women, and children, and has had nearly 600,000 cultivated acres thrown out of cultivation altogether. Beggars may have become plutocrats under the Land League, but they certainly were not the Irish agriculturists. It is painful to add that, as the scene of operations of the Land League exactly coincided with the scene of operations of Mr.



Gladstone's incursions into the region of agricultural legislation for Ireland, the distinguished array of Gladstonian Land Acts has necessarily been followed by just the same unbroken record of disappearance of population and disappearance of tillage. Indeed, if we go back to the first Land Act passed by Mr. Gladstone in 1870, and compare the Ireland of that day with the Ireland such as Gladstonian legislation has now made it, we have to chronicle the reduction of the Irish population under Mr. Gladstone's benefits from 5,400,000 in 1871 to the 1,100,000 *less*, to which that population has shrunk to-day. Since the first Gladstone Land Act 1,000,000 acres have gone out of tillage. Only to think that Ford's and Egan's dollars and the Westminster legislation have combined to produce such appalling . . . prosperity as this! Surely it is a theme for torchlight processions in the Scotland Ward division of Liverpool town!

### THE GOMBEEN MAN

Some, perhaps I should say many, of the most important factors in the creation of the situation, in which the Parliamentary party from Ireland has developed, have practically never received even the most fugitive notice from the Westminster legislature or from public opinion. I could refer to quite a long list of subjects relating to this situation which anybody wanting to govern Ireland intelligently must be conversant with. As, however, under the system of party government the last thing which the public opinion of England has ever desired to know about Ireland—and for the matter of that, about England also—is what is most necessary for understanding matters, I shall be very economical in my observations, and confine them to three things: (1) the gombeen-man; (2) the universal prevalence of what I may call political incredulity; and (3) the Irish press monopoly, which is as serious an evil as most. What is the gombeen-man? He is the Indian Mahajun, only much more so. He is the universal usurer, the shopkeeper

who sells on credit, and does not like to sell for ready money, because his main profit comes from keeping his customers in debt. They lose all power of choice, all right of remonstrance, and all liberty of action, so long as they are in debt to the gombeen-man. Nobody who wants to be anything elective can speak with too much respect of the gombeen-man. He is the curse and the vampire of the countryside. He is the most respectable man in the community, if he be vampire enough. He is the most liberal donor to all Church objects. He is unimpeachably orthodox in his opinions. About 25 per cent. of the keepers of drinking establishments, groceries, general stores, &c., are gombeen-men or are trying to be gombeen-men. I cannot find the word even in Dineen's dictionary of modern Irish, so it is probably some term of slang adapted to describe a personage so loathed and so courted. 'When I shall have £7000 out on credit,' said a gombeen-man to my informant, 'I shall be master of the barony.' If a country fellow offer money down to the stores-keeper, he will be met with a pained expression of countenance and a friendly protest: 'Is it me to be pressing for the money? Pay in your own time. In a month will be soon enough.' A country fellow who has run up a bill for a couple of pounds, which he cannot pay at once, has got the hook in his jaw. He will never get loose. He must pay three shillings a pound for refuse tea, the sweepings of the London warehouses. All the Parliamentarians from Ireland have dozens of gombeen-men among their leading supporters. The conventions of the League are half gombeen-men and half political priests. The country voter is between the upper and the nether millstone. Better sometimes quarrel with the priest than with the gombeen-man. The priest is more influential in the other world, but the gombeen-man can sell you out of house and land in this world. Sir Horace Plunkett, the organiser of agricultural co-operation, was accused of censuring the preponderance of the priest outside of religion. He might have survived. But his co-operative societies menace the credit-system

and usurious domination of the gombeen-man, and the Parliamentary party from Ireland were reminded by multitudes of their most influential nominators that this had passed the limit. A British party government which looks to votes backed Mr. Redmond by removing Sir Horace Plunkett from the office which enabled him to excite the apprehensions of the vampires. So long as the Irish country fellow has to buy his provisions with profound deference for the interests of his credit-grocer, he must buy largely tea, whisky, and similar articles which do himself much harm, but which are cent. per cent. to the gombeen-man. Sir Charles Gavan Duffy lamented the appearance of the rottenest politicians on the hustings 'leaning on two bishops.' To-day he would add, or substitute, one other heraldic supporter : the gombeen-man.

. . . . .

So much for the first of the Irish political factors of which I have spoken. What of the second ? What is the political incredulity ? I might say scepticism or even total infidelity. What I mean is, the general disbelief among Irishmen of the existence of anything distantly resembling principle among English governing parties. This may be hard and unjust. Englishmen may be so convinced of the single-mindedness and altruism of their political parties, that the existence of an opposite tendency of thought across the Irish Sea may deepen their disapproval of Irish waywardness in all respects. That does not alter the fact that pretty nearly every Irishman believes that there is no conceivable question on which England will not yield, if sufficiently worried, or if Ireland can offer the English providence something which the English providence happens to want particularly. I suppose the stock illustration or proof is the famous example of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Parnell. In October 1881 Mr. Gladstone had denounced Mr. Parnell as an utterly abandoned character who was marching through rapine to Imperial and national destruction. In May 1882 and subsequently, Mr. Gladstone



had based his whole Irish policy on a reconciliation with Mr. Parnell. What had happened? Merely that the revolutionary brigand had promised to support the Liberal principles of the impeccable statesman. That was all. Strange to say, the transaction in question has left the impression of the profoundest doubt as to the fixed principles of any English statesman whatsoever.

And what of Irish press monopoly? I have lived in many countries, and nowhere have I met more restricted views on liberty of expression for an adversary's opinions than in Ireland. This detestable evil appeared in its present intensity with the Land League. I remember the late Mr. Edmund Dwyer Gray, proprietor of the *Freeman's Journal* at that time, mentioning to me how he had been obliged to adopt League opinions in his paper under pain of ruin. 'Michael Davitt,' he said, 'threatened me that if my paper continued to oppose the League, he would have a hundred copies of it publicly burned on a hundred platforms, and would start a new paper with the American money. I could not afford to ruin my family. I surrendered.' In addition to all the other benefits which they have conferred upon Ireland, the American Irish destroyed liberty of the press. The *Freeman* has been for years the property of shareholders in a company, and these shareholders being clergymen and members of their party, the paper is written to correspond. It is the chief reading of the League masses throughout the country. Mr. Dwyer Gray, like his father Sir John, was a distinguished Dublin citizen. He never dreamed of exclusiveness or boycotting in his paper. He had a cultivated taste, and wrote a good style. Now you have a partisan board of directors, elected by provincial shareholders of primitive education, and managed by an ex-member of Parliament who deserted Parnell at the call of the Church. Down to the little Sinn Féin paper, the note of Irish journalism is restriction and faction. Nowhere has the policy of the British Government in suppressing the development of popular education, and subjecting it to blinkers and bridle,

been more successful in its consequences than in the Irish press. Between the gombeen-man and the press censor the position of a Parliamentary party paid weekly from the Americano-parochial pay-box is quite unequalled in civilisation.

As for the rest, there is little more to be said. Except as a voting machine in the Westminster lobbies the Parliamentary party from Ireland has no significance whatever. Some day, which cannot be very distant, the adjustment of representation to population will reduce the number of the party by 50 per cent. It will be contrary to the Act of Union as the disendowment of the Protestant Church was contrary to the Act of Union. Who cared? Neither Dublin Castle nor Maynooth College. Just at the moment when the system introduced by the Land League has attained absolute perfection of mechanical operation, it succumbs under universal contempt. The only recruit of distinction who had joined it for a considerable period, Mr. McMorrough O'Kavanagh, has flung his membership to any Molly Maguire whom the Board of Erin may select for service at Westminster. It really does not matter. The Irish question, beaten below the surface by the accord of the front benches and the venerable clergy, will raise its note of interrogation in other surroundings and conditions. After all, it may be admitted that if party government has achieved none but characteristic laurels in Ireland, its output of glory has been hardly more dazzling in parent Britain.

To Irish America the motherland owes the ruin of Home Rule and the crowning degradation of the national representation. Bodies of American citizens of Irish descent set up an absurd scheme of social and political anarchy, which they entrusted to a young squire, of whom they knew nothing beyond the record of six months of somewhat noisy sittings at Westminster. On this curious guarantee they supplied him and his dependants with abundant means to corrupt the constituencies and to expel the Home Rule representatives. 'Prairie value,' 'no rent,' 'boycott,' 'burn London to

the ground'—such were the maxims of high policy which came across the Atlantic. The American dollars placed the power of the purse out of the power of the commons of Ireland. Even if the Irish masses refused to contribute one shilling to the men who had discrowned Parnell as summarily as they had crowned him, the pecuniary consolations of New York and Boston paid the election expenses and the breakfast bacon of the troop of items who continued to fulfil the forms of Parliamentary existence. When the disillusion came, and when even the remarkable talents of Mr. T. P. O'Connor failed to encash more than a comparative handful of coin, the end had long since been reached.

The great name of Mr. Gladstone will continue to be indelibly attached to the evolution of the Parliamentary party from Ireland, as it is attached to the rise and culmination of the agrarian revolution itself. Mr. Gladstone is the one English type who reproduced most nearly the characteristic qualities of the Irish agitator. He came from Oxford and not from the Four Courts. He took himself infinitely more seriously than is customary or possible in Ireland. He had the prestige of the highest position to protect him from the fitful vicissitudes of popularity. But he was an agitator, if also a hierophant. He was his own prophet, too, and no matter what were his other variations of conviction, he never doubted that he was the true one. If I were to speak personally, as the foreign editor, as the student of foreign affairs, I might opine that he never improved the condition of his country abroad. If he improved the condition of Ireland, it was only by a treatment of the kind that is called heroic, because it would take the constitution of a demi-god to endure it and live. His laborious creation of the two interests—the tenant striving to ruin the landlord, the landlord seeing in the tenant an unappeasable enemy—has been repudiated with touching unanimity by the friends of landlords and tenants alike; but he rendered inevitable the conflict of forty years. All his land acts had the example of the



Kilkenny cats as their issue and their inspiration. Professing to desire the most moderate solutions, his work always led to catastrophes. I can remember the dulcet eloquence with which, in 1881, he assured the House that very, very few were the Irish proprietors of estates who could be incommoded by his Bill; and within a few months he had put Parnell into jail on the charge, worse than impiety, of a design to prevent the whole of the tenants of Ireland from rushing into the Land Courts against their landlords. He sneered at the representatives of Mr. Butt as 'nominal Home Rulers,' and was then hugely surprised at the Parnellites claiming to be the genuine article. He visited Mrs. O'Shea from 1882 as the ambassadress of Parnell, and was hugely surprised in 1889 at the iniquity of a suspicious friendship between the pair. When Parnell kept the word he had pledged in Kilmainham to slack down agitation, Mr. Gladstone hastened to pose in his place as the fiery champion of Irish wrongs, and even excused the plan of campaign which Parnell had wanted to suppress. This was not duplicity, but only taking advantage of an occasion for taking an advantage. When another occasion offered for taking an advantage far more deadly, he wrote with triumph to his confidant that he 'would rather have Ireland divided than Parnellite.' Beyond all doubt, while professing to support a temporary retirement of his victim from politics, he deliberately made that retirement most difficult: (1) by demanding it with open dictation and menace; and (2) by inviting the Church to make use of the opportunity. 'Parnell cannot continue to lead. The Pope has now clearly got a commandment under which to pull him up.' And again a couple of days later when the Irish bishops seemed to have left politics to the politicians: 'I own to some surprise at the apparent facility with which the Roman Catholic bishops and clergy appear to take the continued leadership.' When the vilest tongues which ever wagged covered with their vileness the unhappy lady with whom Mr. Gladstone had bargained for the votes of Mr. Parnell,

there came no sign of manly protest from the old man vindictive and triumphant. If every trace of public independence is hourly trampled under foot to-day in Ireland, it was the author of 'Vaticanism' who urged the reluctant or hesitating priesthood to descend from the sanctuaries and dominate the forum. Yet he knew, none better, what the confusion of the two spheres had done for religion and liberty in France, in Naples, in Spain, in Poland. Mr. Gladstone's most improved edition of his sub-colonial sub-legislature in 1893 was openly repudiated by Mr. Redmond in 1893, in the name of Parnell, as 'stamped in red ink with the word "provisional" across every page.' The great English agitator's settlement of the national question had as much finality as his settlement of the agrarian question.

The fate of Ireland does not now depend upon any arrangements of government by party, nor on any combinations of votes and vote-managers. The policy of intervention wins. The powers which will vindicate the dethroned queen of tens of millions of an undying race are not marshalled in lobbies, nor bartered at the place of custom. But such considerations cannot check the expression of gratitude to the true Liberalism, the true Democracy of England; nor should they check what I have to say to another element, which I trust is rather in, than of, the British peoples. I mean that party of hate and insult which has so often ridden to office on a policy of wrong to Ireland, of oppression of Ireland; the party which continues to our day the mentality of the plantations, and the banishments, and the emigrations. I mean the party which cannot even name the name of any ancient race, of any historic nation, outside its own select and contracted villadom, without some epithet of discourtesy, some grimace of supercilious foolishness. 'Low Irish, yah!' 'Bengalee Babu, yah!' 'Ignorant Boer, yah!' The simplest elements of common honesty as well as racial civility are wanting to this sect, for it is still more a sect than a party. Like some little conventicle of self-righteous

as Imperialists-*contra*-Imperialism  
 all to whom they are opposed  
 dare eternal damnation against  
 the ranks of the United Irish League  
 Hibernians to stuff the parlia-  
 ment with trusty delegates of the boss  
 feeble copy of the conspiracy of  
 other nationalities out of the  
 and the prizes of public promotion.  
 bag and the other on the salary  
 quarter of a century the abuse  
 proportions. There exists a  
 y—which is the deadly enemy  
 hundred millions of the Empire's  
 its cupidity and the butt of its  
 examination boards, which are  
 It constitutes 'boards of selec-  
 es in Imperial emoluments and  
 What the bayonets of the  
 made the private perquisite of

only the instance close at hand  
 from Cork to Cairo and Calcutta.  
 ss of an outworn constitution,  
 cies, and which no system of  
 the new responsibilities, that is  
 mainly and unpatriotic scandal.  
 ence not limited to any party  
 in 1870, that the system of Isaac  
 nal self-government combined  
 fords the only basis for union  
 ated the inner as well as the  
 res, English and Irish, which  
 tute themselves for that simple  
 circumstances have enabled me  
 th lay beneath some successful  
 a system who bestowed alike



and even generous in my estimates of everything except crime, and dishonesty, and despotism, whether committed in the name of reform or in the name of authority. I remain what I have been without an instant's variation, a Nationalist Irishman, following the guidance of history and guarding the trust of tradition. The core and compass of my national policy have been the settled, established, and unbroken constitution of the King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland. It is only on the principles which I followed and believed—the principles of Henry Grattan, Edmund Burke, and Isaac Butt—that the Empire can be founded in the nations, and the nations fortified by the Empire. The gravest events loom dark and vast upon the horizon. May the watchers in the council-chamber remember the lessons of the past. It has been recorded long ago how another Imperialism, a superb and arrogant domination, regretted too tardily, when the Goth was at its gates and the Hun was on its borders, the citizenships which it had despoiled and the nations whom it had used and alienated.

I am now entitled to conclude with a final word upon the Parliamentary party from Ireland. Never was that party much less deserving of esteem. Never was that party in more complete ascendancy and domination over the British Constitution. Never was the fundamental imbecility of Unionism and the Act of Union more conspicuously demonstrated. 'The Irish are utterly unfit for self-government, and therefore let them govern us all!' The suppression of the Parliament of Ireland is now indeed avenged. Four score of avowed outlaws to the constitution and professed unfriends of the Empire can make and unmake the Imperial Government. Probably not ten of them would have passed or faced the ordeal of the Irish polls, but for the collecting hat at Transatlantic gatherings and the uncivic oaths and combinations of the political sacristy and the Ribbon Lodge. Certainly almost all of them are the survivors or the heirs of the sordid items who, from 1880 to 1890 and later, ate their daily dole from the red-stained hands of Egan and

Ford. Such as they are, they are the undeniable offspring of the Act of Union, the product and the crown of Unionist centralisation. The grotesque fancy of Swift might have catalogued them in the academy of Laputa, but even his mordant genius would have hesitated to exhibit them—where they stand to-day—in the supreme directorate of the Empire. Spirit of Pitt! Spirit of Castlereagh! I salute your astounding ineptitude. You closed and desecrated that fane of fame and beauty, the august House of the Irish nation. You interrupted and dispersed that lifeguard and bodyguard of Conservative loyalty, the Lords and Commons of the Irish kingdom. You prevented the rise and consolidation of the federated Empire. And you have only bequeathed us . . . *Those!*

## POSTSCRIPT

### IRELAND AFTER THE LAST ELECTION

No Practical Alteration whatever—Private Purse against Collecting Hat  
—Level of Representation unchanged—The Holders of the Balance  
of Power.

EVERYTHING which has taken place in the course of the recent elections in Ireland confirms the foregoing judgments on the Parliamentary party from Ireland, whether we regard its majority or its minority. The majority is . . . the usual majority. Machine-made, Americo-parochially paid, echoes and items. Little more. The appearance of Messrs. Healy and O'Brien with an increased body of sympathisers only proves that if the existing influences, clerical and pecuniary, were at any time to be turned against the official Parliamentarians, they would suffer as swiftly and as seriously as did the stalwarts of Parnell in the election rout of 1892. Mr. Healy, who again owes his election to the intervention of the Cardinal Archbishop of Armagh—effected with perfect propriety and dignity—could never be anything but a Healyite, and he is himself quite unable to say what Healyite means from to-day to to-morrow. He is still the man of fixed principles who declared Mr. Parnell to be 'not a man but an institution,' and who then attacked Parnell as soon as Mr. Gladstone commanded the Gladstonised members to overthrow their leader. Mr. W. O'Brien's success illustrates, above all, my contention that the general impossibility of opposing a moneyed candidate to the subsidised straw men of the League is the predominant cause of the monotonous victory at the polls, or without any polling at all, which has seated the League and disfranchised the constituencies since the first inundation of



the American money. Public opinion in Ireland unanimously ascribes to Mr. O'Brien's matrimonial fortune the subsidies which enabled half a dozen Cork accents to assert themselves against the watchwords of the Ribbon Lodge. With great wealth Mr. W. O'Brien has acquired some Conservatism. He no longer founds failures at New Tipperary. He is in favour of treating landlords with consideration and without plans of campaign. He prefers free whisky to no House of Lords. He no longer edits *United Ireland* for a salary of £500 a year. He can himself found and support *United Irelands* within the congenial circumference of Cork. Mr. O'Brien's financial resources have given local expression to the general dissatisfaction of the constituencies with the Tammany rule; but there is no reason to expect that Mr. O'Brien's Tammany would essentially differ from Mr. Redmond's or Mr. Dillon's. Very possibly the ancient bosses could afford to tolerate more freedom than their would-be successor.

The only fact of real importance which stands out from the ruck of calumny and commonplace is the demonstrated readiness of the constituencies to have electoral contests and real returns at the polls, if only the constituencies can get real candidates able, or enabled, to pay election expenses. In the absence of the payment of election expenses by the State or by somebody, the Tammany will continue to substitute its conventions for the constituencies. I prefer that the election expenses for the most fundamental of State duties should be paid by the State alone. Not until Ireland's men have taken the place of Redmond's men or O'Brien's men can we know what Ireland wants. What she wants may not at first be perfection. The degraded education which England has provided for Ireland will continue to have its effects. But any sort of effect which comes from the constituencies instead of Chicago Pat and Molly Maguire will be as instructive as novel.

In the absence of any true alteration of the system there has naturally been little alteration in the tone and culture of the candidates. The following conversation

between Redmondite and anti-Redmondite candidates at a declaration of the polls seems to attest considerable similarity of taste and refinement. A dispute had arisen about a place-hunting matter. McKean is anti-Redmondite.

*Mr. McKean* : ' Do you mean to say you did not come to me and ask me to get you the office of the Clerk of the Crown and Peace for Louth ? '

*Mr. Lavery* : ' I admit that. Stand back, sir. '

*Mr. McKean* : ' I won't stand back. I say you are a liar and the truth is not in you. '

*Mr. Lavery* : ' Mr. McKean subsequently wrote a letter branding me as a traitor to my country and friends. Was that a gentlemanly or honourable way to begin this contest ? '

*Mr. McKean* : ' You know as much about gentlemanliness as a pig does. '

*Mr. Lavery* : ' Don't talk to me of pigs. You are the man who organised the band of rowdies to have me kicked at Lattan the Sunday after Christmas. '

*Mr. McKean* : ' I did not. You are a liar ! '

*Mr. Lavery* : ' Don't call me a liar. '

The High Sheriff attempted to intervene, but the combatants brushed him aside.—*Public Press*.

It may be admitted that either politician would be sufficiently qualified to come to Westminster and decide the balance of power in the Imperial Parliament under the Act of Union. McKean was elected !

Just as the prevalence of Mr. O'Brien's friends or Mr. Redmond's friends leaves the level of culture and independence practically unaltered, so also does it leave the reality of the clerical power quite unaffected. If League priests generally returned Redmondite candidates, the other side were equally dependent on the churchmen for existence and victory. As I have said, Mr. Healy was elected by a cardinal archbishop. The clergy of Mayo carried Mr. O'Brien's dependant to success against Mr. Redmond's man supported by Mr. John Dillon himself—*Bergeret lui-même*. It must have been an invigorating sensation for that habitual exponent of clerical policy to find himself exposed to personal violence by a furious mob marshalled

by clergymen, who, if they discounselled the violence, directed the hostility. Within his own congested constituency of East Mayo, Mr. Dillon would be expelled with similar vehemence, if the influential ecclesiastics who have regularly presented him to the dumb suffrages of the electorate were to propose an opponent. As I have already explained, the present circumstances of Ireland leave the conscientious judgment, as well as the corporate ambition, of the Catholic churchmen no alternative but to supervise and direct every stage and department of the political movement or stagnation in order to prevent the lay rule of that lower democracy—socially and politically demoralised and dangerous, incompetent and ignorant—which British policy has created and degraded, and whose unstable and unreasoning mass sways inertly between the red hats of Rome and the collecting hats of New York and Chicago. Unlovely as is the compulsory choice between mob rule and priest rule in civil government, the latter is incomparably superior, even though every day of its continuance increases the unfitness of the laity for the ordinary responsibilities and powers of civil civilisation. The policy of Unionism has set up a Bourbon theocracy in Ireland; and it is this theocracy which, by a retribution of fate, holds the balance of power in the Parliament of the Empire!

The division of the Irish representation into rival factions, whose common principle is devout regard for ecclesiastical authority in politics, cannot, of course, injure the supremacy of that authority. It may enhance its power while accentuating its unity. As I have already intimated, the political clergy will never voluntarily allow any lay party or principle to obtain the effective mastery in Ireland. The effective realisation of Home Rule will always be prevented by every subtle enmity combined with every advertised and superficial enthusiasm. There are plenty of signs that the clergy want no lay combination against the House of Lords. The Radicalism of Mr. T. P. O'Connor is as thoroughly suspected as the Rationalism of



Mr. C. S. Parnell. A means will be found to trip up the one as the other. The definite ascendancy of any English party is only a degree less intolerable to devout counsellors than any form of Irish independence. It was to hold the balance of power in a Protestant state that O'Connell disfranchised the small freeholders and secured the emancipation of a more tractable element eighty years ago. The success of that policy has been too unbroken to permit the hope of its abandonment at present. The Irish vote must be cast in the last resort in the interest of a celestial city. There can be no doubt of the overwhelming and engrossing conscientiousness of those venerable directors. But what a comment on that maxim of traditional statecraft, as statecraft is understood in the purlieus of Westminster: 'We must govern Ireland through the priests!' The maxim has been merely adapted to signify governing the Empire through Ireland! Behind the wise politicians, Liberal and Tory; behind the two Houses; while Mr. Asquith and Mr. Balfour sit hatching their plans or counting their chickens; it is interesting to contemplate that other group of tonsured, venerable men—to whom all earthly thrones are as dust beneath their feet—and to whom the Act of Union has given the handling of the wires and strings which will make eighty puppets move into the one scale of the political balance or the other. We may readily believe that those pious managers would have infinitely preferred that there were no histories of outrage and atrocity, of Egan and Ford, in the near genealogy, so to speak, of their useful instruments. One must make the best of one's means! It appears that those means are more dear and welcome to the Westminster statesmanship than Historic Nationhood and Federated Empire; more dear and sacred than the Royal Word of Britain and 'the sacred regard' of Britain's Sovereign and Parliament pledged 'for ever'—eighteen years before the Union—to the Legislative Independence of the King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland.

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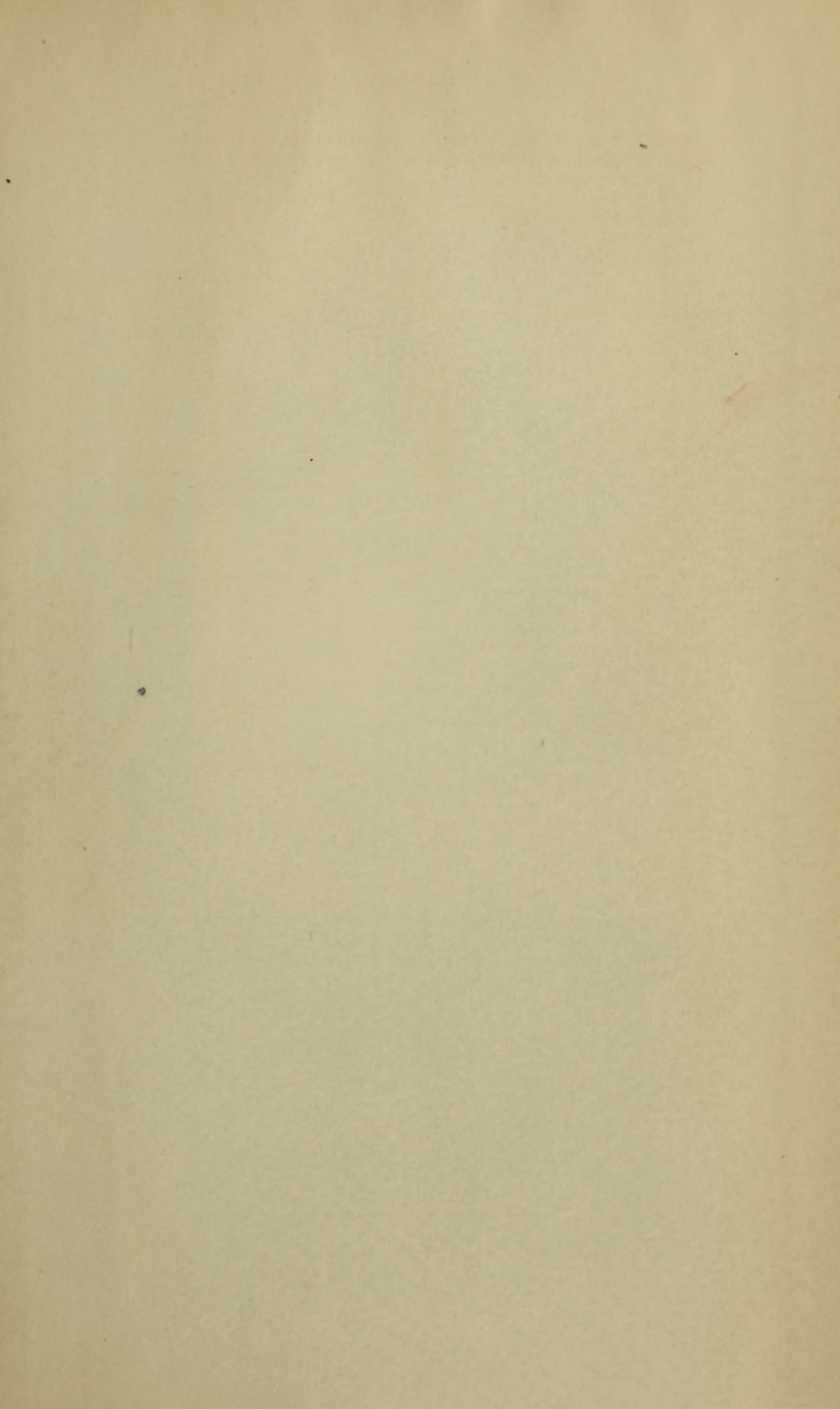
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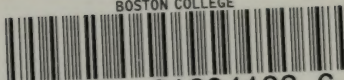
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